The New REPUBLIC

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The Week

PRESIDENT Roosevelt's eagerly awaited speech at the first session of the Pan American conference provided a disappointment to those who had expected a dramatic, concrete proposal for maintaining peace throughout the world, or at the very least, in this hemisphere. If the American representatives are planning any such proposals, they will come later on during the sessions and from other lips than those of the President, whose itinerary called for only forty-eight hours in Buenos Aires. His speech was a vigorous but not particularly novel expression of faith in democracy as the best of all political systems, and in conciliation, arbitration and widespread international trade as factors making for international harmony. His denunciation of dictatorship must have caused some wry faces in Germany, Italy and Japan. It must also have had a mixed reception in the Latin American republics, an overwhelming majority of which are now suffering under fascist or semi-fascist regimes. The President went out of his way, in his peroration, to pay tribute to the divine guidance of Almighty God; since the fascist dictators of Latin America are nearly all good Catholics, and since the liberal and democratic forces in these countries are on the whole anti-religious, the two parts of the President's speech will seem to many people south of the Equator to be inconsistent with each other.

ON A basis of the President's speech, and of the other news from Buenos Aires, the outline of what the United States will attempt to do in the conference seems fairly clear. An effort will be made to insulate this hemisphere from the new war in Europe or Asia, or both, which nearly everyone believes to be imminent. The chief base for this attempt will be general adoption of the principle of the American neutrality legislation, extended, probably, to require a diplomatic, financial and economic boycott of the belligerents upon the outbreak of hostilities. A boycott of this sort presents such enormous difficulties that it is hard to imagine it could ever be maintained. Aside from this an effort will be made to prevent European or Asiatic colonization in this hemisphere, by the threat of joint military resistance by all countries. The attempt will also be made to encourage trade among the American nations, both for its own sake and to cushion the shock of the dislocation of normal business processes if an embargo were put into effect against powers that are at war. It is of course far too early to say whether such a program has any chance of realization.

THE seven days ending December 1 were another fateful period in European and Asiatic affairs. It became increasingly clear that the fascist bloc, embracing Germany, Japan, Italy and probably Austria and Hungary, is an offensive military alliance constituting a direct threat to Soviet Russia and secondarily to France. . . . Despite the Belgian declaration some weeks ago that her government proposed to repudiate the Locarno agreement and stand alone, Great Britain has repeated the pledge to come to the aid of Belgium if she is again the victim of Germany. Political observers expected a similar declaration from France in respect to Great

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Britain. . . . While desperate fighting continued in Spain, with the advantage clearly on the side of the loyalists, her government appealed to the League of Nations, as it had every moral and legal right to do, protesting the actions of Germany and Italy. The League, under British and French pressure, added another chapter to its deep humiliation by seeking to postpone discussion of the Spanish plea as long as possible. . . . Reports from Paris indicated that France and perhaps Great Britain hoped to reopen the war-debt question with the United States, with the patent purpose of seeking to float new loans here primarily for military purposes. . . . The most admirable award of the Nobel Peace Prize ever made was announced, the 1935 prize going to Carl von Ossietzky, German pacifist and Nazi prisoner. . . . China warned Japan, in the most belligerent terms yet employed, that she will fight to keep her northern provinces. . . . Soviet Russia's new constitution was promulgated in a week during which the world's attention was concentrated on the danger of war on her eastern and western frontiers.

THE American Federation of Labor wound up its Tampa Conference with no surprises. While the unions in the C.I.O. were not formally expelled, their suspension continues, and hope of healing the breach in the labor movement seemed farther away than ever. The A.F. of L. demanded a thirty-hour week and continued wage increases to end the situation under which from a third to a half of all American families are below the minimum decent standard of life. The power of the conservatives was evident in the virtual avoidance of the issue of a constitutional amendment for the protection of labor, which had been approved a year ago. . . . The seamen's strike continued on all three coasts, the hope for a victory of the men being increased as additional unions joined the strike in the East and several steamship companies acceded to the strikers' demands. . . . Paul D. Peacher, city marshal and cotton planter of Earle, Arkansas, was fined $3,500 and given a suspended sentence of two years in prison. Peacher had followed the familiar Southern practice of arresting innocent Negroes and forcing them to work without wages on his plantation. The case was prepared by federal agents from Washington, and the jury found him guilty with obvious reluctance and after stern instructions from the judge. . . . Five members of the Black Legion were sentenced to life imprisonment for the wanton killing of a Negro. . . . The American Labor Party in New York State refused to permit amalgamation with Socialists or Communists as such. . . . W. R. Hearst, evidently alarmed by his recent unpopularity, made peace with the American Newspaper Guild, resumed publication of his Seattle paper and hired President Roosevelt's son-in-law as publisher. . . . Republican opponents of the President, having raised the baseless charge that he might accept a third term, received a gratuitous assurance from Mr. George Creel that he won't.

NAZIS blustered and stormed at Norway last week, upon the award of the Nobel Peace Price to Carl von Ossietzky, the great German pacifist and former editor of Die Weltbuhne. The Norwegian government replied that it had no connection with the Nobel prize committee (a government official having previously resigned from it, probably just to avoid any such complication), and the prize committee declined to comment further. Von Ossietzky, who has been a prisoner in Nazi jails and concentration camps from February, 1933, until he was removed to a hospital, after hints had been heard that he might get the Nobel award, said that he hoped he might go to Oslo to receive the prize, and that he remained true to pacifism. In the eyes of the civilized world this is probably the peak of von Ossietzky's career; his refusal to flee from Germany, his endurance of torture that has made him a physically broken man, his steadfast courage, have earned him power larger than the prize.

THE cultural activities initiated by the W.P.A., such as the Federal Art Project, the Writers' Project, the Theatre Project, the W.P.A. teachers' groups and training classes, have been of special value not only in salvaging individual lives but also in employing existing talents to produce work that represents a genuine contribution to society. Now comes the discouraging news that cultural projects are being curtailed. In New York City 3,000 persons already have been dropped from the W.P.A. rolls and official announcement is made that 19 percent of the workers on the Federal Art Project must be dismissed. News from San Francisco tells of fifty artists being removed from the rolls, 100 are slated to go in Boston, and surveys are being conducted in Oklahoma and other states looking toward a reduction of personnel on the Writers' Project. According to reports reaching the City Projects Council in New York City, similar dismissals are being made in other centers, notably Philadelphia, Chicago and Cleveland. These reductions are particularly regrettable unless—as we suspect is not the case—other jobs are waiting for those discharged. The white-collar projects at best were never large enough to take care of all those in need of them and creative artists are just about the last group to feel the benefits of an upturn in general business conditions.

WHAT appears to be a particularly bald and vicious frame-up comes to light in the conviction of Emerson Jennings, Wilkes-Barre labor and civic leader, for the bombing of Judge W. A. Valentine's automobile during the anthracite strike of 1935. Valentine is the jurist who issued an injunction ordering the rescinding of the strike call, and Jennings is the printer who led the fight for Judge Valentine's impeachment. A highly mysterious explosion occurred at a time when Judge Valentine's car was unoccupied, and no one was injured. Five months later Jennings was arrested and charged

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with the crime, and then was held in prison for thirteen months before he could get his case brought to trial. The county prosecutor wanted to drop proceedings for lack of evidence, but the court, of which Judge Valentine was a member, appointed a special prosecutor and insisted that the trial proceed. The chief witness against Jennings proved to be Thomas Lynott, alias McHale, a former private detective who had been in the employ of the all-powerful Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (which, with its alter ego, the Glen Alden Coal Company, completely dominates the business and political life of the region) when he conceived the idea that Jennings might be responsible for the bombing and was hired at the rate of $15 a day by the court to collect "evidence." Of the three supporting witnesses, one disappeared before the trial and the other two recanted and openly declared they had been hired to "frame" Jennings. In spite of this Jennings was convicted and faces a prison term of twenty years. Arthur Garfield Hays, of the American Civil Liberties Union, has applied for a new trial on Jennings' behalf.

IT IS now some little time since The New Republic has been suppressed in any foreign country, and we rise to remark that our feelings are faintly hurt about it. We learn from the daily press that Fortune has been banned in Japan, an issue of Asia suppressed in China, and that Time has been in trouble in England. The Literary Digest and Esquire have both been forbidden in Cuba and even The New York Times was interdict in Italy for a while. We blush to admit that the only suppression we have enjoyed for months and months has been in a few state penitentiaries in the good old U.S.A., where prisoner-subscribers have not been permitted to receive our journal. We feel that the roll of periodicals that are suppressed is nowadays a more distinguished one than the list of those over which a sleepy censor nods as he lets them go by; and we hereby pledge ourselves to get suppressed, somewhere or other, at the earliest possible moment.

NEARLY two generations ago Henry George flamed across the intellectual sky with his analysis of the old forms of taxation and his proposal that revenue for state purposes should be obtained entirely from the "single tax" on land, equivalent to the total rental value. There are probably many people nowadays who assume that this idea remains solely in the theoretical realm. If so, they are mistaken: at the recent International Conference to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, held in London, an impressive list of places was reported in which the single tax is at least partially in operation. More than one-half the population of New Zealand, it was said, lives in towns or counties where land value is the only source of local taxation. In Queensland and New South Wales this is true of all local authorities except for a few water and sewage boards. In the four western provinces of Canada, nearly all municipalities exempt improvements from taxation, either wholly or partially, and farm buildings and other structures are almost entirely exempt. The same situation prevails in Denmark and parts of South Africa. In the United States, one major city—Pittsburgh—is gradually transferring taxation from improvements to land, with the result that taxes on the former are now one-third lower, and on the latter, one-third higher, than would be expected. An American speaker, Mr. Harold Buttenheim, editor of The American City, drove home the lesson that the efforts of town planners and those seeking decent housing for the poor are balked, over and over again, by exorbitant land values which would be corrected if the single tax were even partially applied.

SINCE Angelo Herndon has become a symbol, to thousands of white as well as Negro people, of courage in the face of oppression, it is sometimes forgotten that his case is of considerable importance as a test of the constitutionality of a certain type of anti-labor statute. Angelo Herndon was an organizer for the Unemployment Council of Atlanta, Georgia, when the state of Georgia closed all relief stations in June, 1932, and he led a demonstration of 1,000 unemployed to the Fulton County Commissioners. The next day the Commissioners voted $6,000 for relief, and a few days later Herndon was arrested. He was indicted, convicted and sentenced to eighteen to twenty years on the chain gang under a law derived from a pre-Civil War statute designed to crush slave uprisings, which defines insurrection as "any attempt . . . to induce others to join in any combined resistance to the lawful authority of the state" and makes it punishable by death, or a term of five to twenty years. This law was upheld by the state supreme court, and on two occasions the United States Supreme Court has refused to pass on it. Finally a decision was obtained on December 7, 1935, from Judge Hugh M. Dorsey, former Governor of Georgia, declaring the statute unconstitutional, but this was reversed on appeal by the state in the state supreme court, and the United States Supreme Court has now announced that it will review the case. If the statute is upheld it will mean the trial and probable conviction of eighteen other men and women who were indicted with Herndon, as well as the use of similar laws in other states. Funds to aid in the considerable expense of the appeal should be sent to the International Labor Defense, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City.

LAST July we noted with pleasure an apparent change of attitude on the part of the American Legion. Mr. Frank Miles, editor of The Iowa Legionnaire, told a meeting of the National Education Association that the Legion no longer would advocate such measures as compulsory loyalty oaths for teachers and prosecution of children and others who failed to salute the flag. Mr. Miles gave added

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weight to this pronouncement by saying that his views coincided with those of National Commander Murphy. It now appears that these hopeful signs of conversion to the principles of academic freedom were not indicative of the attitude of the Legion as a whole. The Legion has announced an intensive "Americanism" program for 1937, with most of the attention centered upon the public schools. This program seems to be a continuation of the 1936 campaign, which was described in a confidential outline sent to post commanders under the title of "Americanism—A Call to Action." In this outline Legionnaires are advised to see to it that school officials are "encouraged to be more careful of the organizations to which school buildings are loaned" and to "prepare a monthly news letter or bulletin to be sent to each State Superintendent of Public Instruction for disseminating information among the high-school principals in his state in regard to communistic and radical movements of youth groups."

MILLING companies in the Middle West disagree with the widespread announcements of the prosperity of the country—or know how to qualify them—judging by an ingenious trick they have developed to increase the sale of their poultry feed and cornmeal. Aware that large numbers of their customers are so hard-pressed that they use flour-sacks to make handkerchiefs, shirts, dresses, curtains and other articles, the companies now design their sacks with this in mind. One company puts out a sack in ten different shades of fast color with printing that readily washes out to leave no trace of the origin of the material; this is said to be very successful. No doubt there is a humorous side to this (". . . and get three sacks of poultry feed—in baby blue"), but it is also a nice irony that private industry, to whose inability to provide plenty this poverty is due, should make more profit from the makeshifts of the poor.

GOOD news about civil liberties for the week ending December 1: Paul D. Peacher, town marshal and planter of Earle, Arkansas, was convicted by a federal jury on all seven counts of an indictment that accused him of falsely arresting a group of Negroes and forcing them to work on his farm, given a suspended sentence of two years in prison and fined $3,500. . . . While 600 people gathered before the bar offices in a demonstration, the California State Bar dropped three of four charges against Leo Gallagher. Hearing on the remaining charge is scheduled for December 8. . . . Bad news for the same period: Attorneys of the city of Bessemer, Alabama, have appealed for a rehearing of the decision of Judge W. H. Samford ruling as unconstitutional the Bessemer city literature ordinance under which Jack Barton was sentenced to 180 days on the chain gang for having two copies of a radical magazine in his possession. . . . Fifty striking seamen of Mobile, Alabama, have been jailed under an anti-picketing law. . . . Homer Welch, textile-union organizer, was found guilty of manslaughter at Talledega, Alabama, by a jury instructed that he might be so convicted if they found the homicide was "the natural or approximate result" of a "conspiracy to picket" in violation of Alabama's anti-picketing law. . . . Officers of a newly formed cannery workers' union, now on strike in Tampa, Florida, were beaten and arrested, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, and other terroristic acts were used against the strikers. . . . State Senator John J. McNaboe of New York said that Cornell University was a center of Communist activity, and exhibited listing of the Young Communist League in a university guidebook as proof. University officials pointed out that there were 200 pages in the guidebook and this organization had three lines, and estimated that there were 25 Communists at Cornell, out of a total of 6,100 students.

RECENT studies by Dr. George W. Hartmann indicate once more that people are generally in favor of progressive political measures but react unfavorably to the "scare-words" connected with them, as suggested by Selden C. Menefee's article on this subject in our pages several months ago. [The New Republic, July 15.] Dr. Hartmann listed twenty statements, a positive response to ten of which would indicate radicalism, while a positive response to the other ten indicated conservatism. Personal interviews showed 55.5 percent of the subjects in favor of socialization, only six of the twenty statements gaining less than a 50-percent "radical response." Each of these exceptions indicated that the voter had been in some way indoctrinated; for example, one contained the word "socialism." In rating the names of political parties, however, 88 out of 168 gave "Republican" first place, and in general the two big parties ran ahead. Dr. Hartmann comments that "evidently most of these voters want the specific things for which socialism stands, but they do not want to have them labeled that way," and believes that a judicious change in designation might bring about socialism sooner in this country. It seems more likely, however, that any name selected would be made a "scare-word" as the others have been, by the deliberate misrepresentation he also mentions. Dr. Hartmann's results are in part confirmed by the experiment of a Chicago high-school teacher who took a straw vote of his class. Landon won by 70 to 20 percent over Roosevelt, but when the students voted on the platforms alone, with all party designation carefully removed, the platform of the Communist Party got 54 percent of the votes.

IN AN editorial in The New Republic of November 18, "The Press Loses the Election," we said that "in New York City, Mr. Landon had five papers out of eight." The statement should have read: "five papers out of nine."

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The Fascist Alliance

THE NEW German-Japanese alliance, according to its terms as announced, represents something strange in international agreements. It purports to be for defensive purposes, but it is not supposed to be a military understanding to repel armed aggression by other nations. Rather it is aimed against a voluntary organization which is composed of political parties and which has no army, navy or air force—the Communist International.

An alliance for mutual defense against unprovoked military attack would be absurd on its face in the case of both these nations, for a number of reasons. In the first place, neither faces a potential foe which by the wildest stretch of imagination would be likely to try to invade it. The Soviet Union, as all agree, is satisfied with the territory it now has, needs peace for its economic development and will not start a war. France and Britain fear war above everything else. China, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other minor powers do not constitute a danger. In the second place, both countries formerly belonged to the League of Nations, one of whose principal purposes was to protect its members against aggression, and both withdrew to carry out unilateral military action of their own. Germany was guaranteed against invasion by the Locarno treaty, which she herself violated. In addition, Germany and Japan have been offered the opportunity to sign non-aggression pacts to which the Soviet Union was a party, and both have declined.

A defensive alliance against the Communist International seems even more absurd. Each signatory has exterminated the Communist movement within its borders, and has nothing to fear at present from this source. Even if it had, the other could not help it. Alliance with someone on the other side of the globe is a queer method by which to seek aid against domestic political parties. If the understanding means anything at all, then, it signifies an intention to fight communism outside of Germany and Japan. This must involve either intervention in the domestic affairs of foreign states, or conquest of them. In other words, the new alliance must of necessity be an instrument of aggression. It is in this respect like Metternich's Holy Alliance against democracy.

There are only two nations in the world in which communism is now in the ascendancy—the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia. If Germany and Japan are really to fight communism where it amounts to anything, they must therefore invade and attempt to conquer one or both of these states. Is this the real meaning of the document? Soviet spokesmen assert that it is; they state positively that the two contracting powers have for some time had a military alliance for this purpose and that the present announcement is merely a thin veil over the previously existing reality.

This may be true, but an additional interpretation readily presents itself. Japan, in seizing Manchuria, and in pursuing her military penetration of North China and Inner Mongolia, has continually protested that her action was necessary to protect herself—and China—against the Reds. Germany, intervening in Spain on behalf of General Franco's rebels, has done so with the barefaced accusation that the Madrid government is a creation of Moscow. China of course is not communist, and does not need or want the aid of the wolf in keeping the fox at bay, while the elected constitutional government of Spain, against which the rebels revolted, was a coalition including moderate liberals, in which the Communists played a minor part. The common formula of Japan and Germany in these cases is a rationalization which they themselves can hardly believe, put forward to enlist support among other powers and to cover their aggression with respectability. The new alliance formalizes this rationalization and gives notice that it probably will be extended to other cases. It may well portend further imperialistic aggression against peoples less powerful than Soviet Russia.

If a Nazi revolt should occur against constitutional government in Czechoslovakia, for example, the formula could be applied with fully as much color of truth as in Spain or China. Czechoslovakia is a democratic republic like Spain, and Communists are no more powerful in its affairs than they are in China. But the government has a social-democratic tinge and has an alliance of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union. German supplies, airplanes, tanks and munitions, or even armed forces, could be sent to the rebels. Intervention in Rumania might be excused because of the supposed penetration of Soviet influence into that country. Throughout middle Europe and the Near East, the fascists might, with the same formula, find reasons for their advance. And if, as is likely, such action brought the Soviet Union in on the other side, because of existing defensive alliances, the great war to save the world from communism would be on.

The formula also was expected to be of use in attracting other nations to the entourage of the aggressive powers, nations which might be left cold by pleas to favor naked imperialism, but might look more warmly upon an anti-communist crusade. Italy was of course expected to join; Mussolini has recently been not less emphatic than Hitler in playing up the Red menace. But the chief usefulness of the formula was expected to be found in its effect on opinion in France and particularly in Great Britain. If these nations would let Japan, Germany and Italy do as they pleased in the East, both Near and Far, the fascist diplomatic offensive would be won.

But here was a serious miscalculation. Much as rightist Frenchmen may dislike the People's Front or may rail against Premier Blum and democracy, the plain hint that Germany would be ready to foment a civil war in France and to intervene on one side of it is not likely to strengthen sympathy for German aims among French people of any class.

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And of course that is exactly what Hitler does hint, first by taking sides against the People's Front government in Spain on the charge that it is communist, and next by announcing an alliance to fight communism everywhere. As for Britain, the Germans have displayed their usual lack of understanding of the British temper and sensibilities. The London statesmen see well enough that the new agreement is offensive rather than defensive, and refuse to be misled. Anthony Eden promptly announced that his country would not remain passive in case Belgian neutrality were again violated. Furthermore, among the very forces in Britain which might be most sympathetic toward an anti-Red crusade, there is a lively apprehension of Japanese advances in China. It is becoming clearer every day that while England does not want to fight, and for that reason has narrowed and defined her commitments since the Ethiopian fiasco, she will not encourage the dictators to continue to endanger world peace by picking an indefinite series of objectives. A frigid zone now surrounds the German embassy in London.

Russia's New Constitution

SOVIET RUSSIA'S new constitution has been promulgated at a moment marked with historical irony. The long feared war between the U.S.S.R. and a combination of her foes, beginning with Germany and Japan, seems more imminent than ever. During a conflict on the modern scale, any country must necessarily be governed on a dictatorial basis. The degree of centralized control in Soviet Russia has never been so great as its enemies have maintained; but if war comes, it will inevitably move in that direction and not in the other.

The conditions created by the new constitution have been widely discussed and do not need to be reported again in detail. A bicameral legislature is set up consisting of the All Union Soviet Congress and the House of Nationalities. The first of these has 600 members, elected on a geographical basis of one member to each 300,000 people, through direct, universal and secret suffrage. The House of Nationalities has 300 members chosen by the provincial councils. The two houses together will select the Council of Commissars, the Presidium of thirty-one members, the President and his assistants. Members of the Soviet Congress can be recalled by a vote of two-thirds of their constituents, and there is a provision for referenda on important subjects. Public questions can be asked, as in the British House of Commons, and answers are obligatory. There is universal suffrage for both sexes over the age of eighteen, with no discrimination against former "class enemies." Freedom of speech, religion and the press are guaranteed.

Just what degree of liberal democracy is envisaged by this constitution, assuming that by some miracle war can be avoided? Dispatches from Moscow in the past few days have made clear what everyone of course knew, that the dictatorship of the proletariat, operating through the Communist Party, still goes on. In other words, Russia still has a one-party system and has no intention of setting up any other. We are told that freedom of speech and of the press of course do not imply the right to urge a return to the Tsar or to private capitalism, and that such a suggestion is nonsensical because there is nobody in the U.S.S.R. who wants any such thing. This is not quite literally true, but it comes nearer to actuality every year. The millions of Russians who are thirty years of age or less have had no personal contact with any other system than their own; if they were requested to discuss alternatives to socialism, they would hardly know how to begin and would certainly consider the debate an academic one. The same general situation prevails in regard to freedom of religion, also guaranteed by the new constitution. It is almost literally the case that organized religion is dying out with those who are now forty or older.

All intelligent Russians know that they are in a transition period, that it will probably last for another generation at least, and that it bears hardly any more resemblance to the future collectivized society than it does to the old regime of the Tsars. The U.S.S.R. is still ruled by the Communist Party, which, although its base is being rapidly broadened, still consists of a small minority of the population, with difficult entrance requirements and the most severe demands upon its members in the way of loyalty, discipline and endeavor. It is nonsense to say, as hostile critics often do, that what exists in the U.S.S.R. today constitutes the communist ideal, for that or any other country. If the present regime survives and its expectations are fulfilled, many of the present problems will simply disappear in the floodtide of success, and many of the present restrictions will be removed because they will no longer be necessary. This does not mean, of course, that a political democracy on our model is envisaged. It does not imply, either, that if a government of similar aims were set up in another land, it would closely resemble what we see in the U.S.S.R.

The past two decades have taught us how profound are the national characteristics of every country, even as affecting an international movement that looks toward eventual freedom and happiness for all the people of the world. In Soviet Russia, which had never known political democracy, had never had a day's freedom of any sort, the course of affairs, complicated by civil war and the unceasing and malignant hostility of other countries, was enormously different from the course that a similar movement might take in another country with a long tradition of political freedom, with universal literacy and the existing technological base for an industrialized society which the U.S.S.R. so sadly lacked. This is why those individuals go seriously astray who announce that they are opposed to the dictatorships both of fascism and communism. The fascist dictatorship is an end

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in itself; the dictatorship of the proletariat is a means to a very different end, and the task of achieving that end has been harder in the U.S.S.R. than it would be in almost any other country in the world. The fact that eighteen years after the beginning of the revolution it has been possible to relax the restrictions of the transition stage so much as they are relaxed in the new constitution may yet prove, in the perspective of history, a remarkable achievement.

The Tampa Sit-Down

AS THE Tampa convention of the American Federation of Labor came to a close last week, one thing was clear: not a single step was taken toward the unity of labor. In complete control of the die-hard craft unionists, who had made sure of their control by barring ten C.I.O. unions with a million members, the convention represented little more than a meeting for the ratification of the die-hard program. It upheld the Executive Council in its suspension of the C.I.O. unions, though that action was clearly a usurpation of power, and it gave the Executive Council extraordinary powers to punish unions, though such powers are in flagrant violation of the Federation's voluntary and democratic structure. Since this program was adopted in the enforced absence of one-third of the Federation, it can be interpreted only in one way. It was the program of men who were willing to sacrifice democracy in the labor movement in order to perpetuate their own control. It was a program of despair.

As a result of this action, the split between the industrial and craft unionists has widened immeasurably. The C.I.O. spokesmen have already indicated that they now cannot return to the Federation except on two conditions. The suspensions of their unions must first be lifted and the Federation's constitution must be amended specifically to deprive the Executive Council of any power to suspend a union for any cause. This had been the accepted interpretation of the Federation's charter until the Council suspended the C.I.O. unions. Thus the chances for peace rest upon the probability that the Council will reverse itself, admit its error, and call a special convention of the Federation for the purpose of depriving itself of the powers it has assumed. Those chances are obviously slim.

The die-hard craft unionists demonstrated in other ways that they were fearful of losing control of organized labor. This was apparent in the provision adopted depriving city central labor bodies from placing firms on the unfair list, if the firms have agreements with any international unions. Before such firms can now be declared unfair, approval must be had from the international unions involved or, if that is not forthcoming, from the Executive Council. It takes little imagination to see how seriously such red tape will cripple the central labor unions in their efforts to support strikes. To cite but one example, such a provision would have prevented the Seattle labor movement from supporting the Newspaper Guild strike against The Post-Intelligencer and, quite probably, would have prevented the Guild from winning one of the outstanding strikes in newspaper history.

The reactionary leaders of the Federation, it also appears, are not only interested in tying the hands of labor. They even want to gag discussion of labor's problems. Under a further amendment to the Federation's constitution, the federal labor unions will no longer be permitted to introduce resolutions at the annual conventions unless they first receive the approval of the Executive Council. State and city central bodies must introduce their resolutions thirty days in advance of the convention. Since it is from these three groups that the vast majority of progressive resolutions come, the effect of the provision will be to block discussion of many important problems.

It is in these actions of the Tampa convention that the bankruptcy of the present Federation leadership is revealed. Instead of facing the vital issues of labor organization, their chief concern was to clamp down on activity and restrict free and open discussion. There has been a suspicion for a long time that this was the real philosophy of the die-hards of the Federation. Their failure to build a genuine labor movement was evidence of it. But it was only when they excluded the progressives from their convention, met in their own privacy, and adopted a program close to their own hearts, that the fact was proved beyond doubt. Perhaps the best description of the Tampa convention is afforded in an editorial in The Union News Service, organ of the Committee for Industrial Organization: "A strange sit-down has been in progress in Tampa, Florida. While working people in many factories have sat down on the job as means of bettering their conditions, the sitters of Tampa have conducted the first sit-down *against* labor." They have, in effect, abdicated the field of organizing labor and left it to those with the initiative to move ahead.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HAMILTON BASSO H. N. BRAILSFORD LEWIS MUMFORD
JOHN T. FLYNN WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN
W. P. MANGOLD JON. MITCHELL JOHN DEWEY
REXFORD G. TUGWELL

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The Future of National Planning

Third in the Series, "The Next Four Years"

This is the third in the series of articles on the next four years in various aspects of American life. The first and second, by Representative Maury Maverick and Secretary Henry Wallace, appeared in our issues of November 25 and December 2. The other contributors will be John L. Lewis, Morris L. Cooke, Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, Thomas Reed Powell, Bruce Bliven and George Soule.—THE EDITORS.

HOW WE shall develop our planning in the United States is an immediate problem. There are always those who would set up some kind of economic council which would tell us what to do. Such proposals as this—and there are many of them—develop our doctrinaire and essentially naïve approaches to public policy. They betray a lack of familiarity with the American spirit. For ours is a venturesome and experimental habit of mind which perhaps lacks something of discipline and logic but which makes up for that by vigor and forthrightness. We dislike to be told what to do unless we have participated in the decision. Even then we are characteristically critical of the machinery of administration and tolerant of minority dissent.

POLITICAL EFFICIENCY: DOCTRINAIRE OR DEMOCRATIC

All this means that we are democratic—rather fundamentally so. Not that as human beings we differ from other nations or races, but that we have an agreed set of social attitudes which might as well be inherited since we insert them into the mind of each new member of our society and hold him to them through his life by convention.

The believer in economic planning who discovers these attitudes belatedly is always disconcerted, and in backtracking to discover his error he usually makes another. This achieves a theoretical balance but does not really get us forward. He begins, usually, with the premise that dictatorships are more effective in economic affairs and proceeds to the conclusion that this effectiveness comes about not because planning is thorough but because the plans are meticulously carried out, if need be by force. This calls for the suppression of dissent—in other words, for the abandonment of democracy. Therefore, he reasons, communism, or it may be fascism, is a superior competitive instrument and must eventually displace democracy.

The discovery that we have an invincible objection to such a change as this, leads, by simple reasoning, to the conclusion that we must resign ourselves to an inferior form of economic life, relatively inefficient, undisciplined, chaotic, subject to intermittent depressions which, as they deepen, will develop crises so serious that dictatorship will impose itself rather naturally in some one of them. For all the time we shall have had before us the example of better-run countries and shall, unconsciously, have been preparing our minds for acceptance of their system.

For myself, I have always been unable to discover the inevitable superiority of the doctrinaire system. It seems to operate better because there is no criticism; it may be that it does so while the doctrine roughly fits the facts. When the facts change, the doctrine ceases to be useful. It is at least arguable that a system built up without deference to preconception, and therefore without hostage to doctrine, may have greater survival value and may even work tolerably well in doing the things that must be done as we go along.

The steps that have to be taken to achieve a minimum of order are relatively few, but they are momentous. They ought to be thoroughly discussed during the breathing spell that is now beginning. The purchasing power of consumers has to be enlarged until it suffices to take off the market the goods that an expanding industry can supply. Otherwise employment will flag, debts will again increase and the two—unemployment and debt—will again bury us in disaster. This is an oversimple statement of our central problem. Yet if this can be met and overcome, by the use of one or a thousand social devices, we shall survive and go our characteristic way without unusual difficulty.

AMERICAN DICTATORS

The real reason anyone doubts that this can be done, I think, is that the very system the effort would seek to avoid is the one that has to be fought and overcome. American business men are not, in their own minds, dictators. Most of them abhor the idea. Yet many of them behave as dictators do, within their own sphere, and defend vigorously their right to do so. Paradoxically, they do it in the name of democracy—witness the Liberty League! We have the right to ask of them as much of consistency as is required for practical purposes. They will have to come to inter-industry planning or else give up intra-industry planning. And into the discussion there will have to be brought the interest of the consumer, for he is the key to prosperity. If what our business men are interested in is the administration of a huge and smoothly running sys-

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tem of production, their future is a bright one; if they are interested still in gambling, and in keeping society insecure so that there may be uncertainties to provide gamblers' risks, their future is not so bright. If democracy is to succeed, it must reduce risks and bring each citizen greater faith in the future. It is on this ground that competition with dictatorship will be carried out.

The People Speak for Planning

We are a fortunate people. We have come through disaster into better times. Thanks to the humanity of the President, what we have to look back upon is mostly the fears we had during the dark days. Our health and our strength were maintained far better than we had a right to expect. Moreover, an unprecedented referendum has repudiated the return to the governance which brought our trials upon us. But those fears are etched indelibly on millions of American minds. They expect that those who brought us out of the darkness will not lead us into it again. And they have indicated that they are indifferent to the means so long as the achievement is made secure. No democratic government ever carried so great a responsibility; none ever had so unmistakable a mandate.

The people have had their say, but what they said violated none of their traditions or attitudes. It did violate some of the principles that self-appointed spokesmen sought to put in their mouths. No one, I am sure, realizes these truths more clearly than President Roosevelt. He was a people's candidate; his source of strength is in their support, their continued confidence. They expect him to show the way to economic security. He can do it only if he is joined in the trial by the functioning administrators of the economic system. How we plan for the future will be so largely determined by the business men of America that all of us, I think, in these post-election days are looking anxiously for the signs of their consent to coöperation. If this is withheld, the four years on which we are entering will be difficult ones. If they consent, everything will be easy. Coming back to the traditions and the methods of democracy will not be a long penitential road for most administrators; for some it will seem incredibly long. Yet they have been told to travel it by a great voice. That voice spoke as it did, not because of an issue made by the President, but because of an issue made by his enemies. Under provocation he called them "economic royalists," and where his finger pointed the stroke fell. The laying aside of the ermine, and the taking up of argument and the designing board is the logical consequence in patriotic minds. Planning begins where hatred ends. We may be entering now on new days of foresight and reason, when the things that must be done will not be shirked but met with open and generous minds. Let us hope that it is so.

But this is a question for the moment only. We shall soon know whether what is to be expected during the next four years is the simple exploitation of a boom; or whether the time will be used to build something more permanent. What happens here is of the greatest consequence to our future, but it does not touch large fields of planning which are being steadily and hopefully developed. These have to do with our natural resources, and more particularly our land. It has not been thought to be improper for government to gather and put into order the facts concerning land, and the work has been going on intensively for years. The consequence was that when the opportunity came we knew exactly where and how to put into operation not only the A.A.A. for crop control, but also an extensive program of retirement and adjusted use.

The success of these efforts stands now in vivid contrast with the attempts to make adjustments in the industrial field. In industry, of course, there was more pulling and hauling of affected interests, but this would have been greatly reduced if we had known about industry what we know about agriculture. The A.A.A. would not have worked if our experts had been unable to forecast within remarkably small range the behavior, for instance, of cotton producers and buyers under given conditions. No move had to be made in the dark. The only real variable was the weather; and even a succession of unusual years caused no great concern and brought no hardships. In industry there is an opportunity to lay the same basis through research and analysis. It ought to be begun at once in the same way that agricultural-outlook statistics and land planning were started in the early twenties.

The next four years ought to see us well on our way to a solution of our land problem and to the reorganization of the tenure system, which is generally admitted to need reform. If lands unfit for profitable tillage can be transformed into forests, parks, game refuges and grazing districts; and if the people there can be resettled in productive areas; if, furthermore, the tenant and the sharecropper can be helped to buy land, and if (along with the debt-ridden small owner) they can be helped to keep it—if they can be protected from mortgages and meanwhile be given the benefits of management supervision—then we shall have worked out one of our most troublesome situations. The Resettlement Administration has no doubt that all this can be done, after its experience of the last year, at a relatively low cost.

The Fear of a New Depression

Yet this whole area in which planning has prepared the way for action is not the trouble-spot of our civilization. Like Europe, which prepares for a new war before the old one is liquidated, all of us have begun to dread a new depression before we have emerged from the old one. It is undoubtedly true that certain measures have been taken which may postpone its onset and even mitigate its effects. These are easy to list: the control of secu-

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rity and commodity exchanges; the better balance of agricultural and industrial incomes; the steady carrying of income through work-relief and resettlement grants to the lowest income groups; the appraisal policies of the Farm Credit Administration and of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, which may steady speculation in real estate; the encouragement of higher wages and shorter hours. These and some other advances have been made. But the most important of them are dependent on a large federal budget, which may or may not be maintained, and on considerable reform of the tax system.

Industry: The Sore Spot

Even if all these were maintained in full effect, which is doubtless too much to expect, there is reason for concern so long as industry, the great force in our economic life, continues its unplanned and directionless course. This is where planning is really needed to prevent future trouble and it is also the most hopeless from the planners' point of view. Even if the well known objections of our courts were out of the way, which of course they are not, there remain the obstacles of lack of knowledge and of unwillingness of the administrators concerned to coöperate. Without these there is little chance for progress. And it is in these that we must look for some change.

The election was hardly past, with its registry of approval, when the leaders of the farm organizations appeared in Washington with demands for a renewal of the crop control—the planning for agriculture—which had been rejected by the Supreme Court. Neither the administrators of industry nor the leaders of labor have shown any renewal of interest in industrial statesmanship of a like sort. Management is seeking nothing, apparently, except the enlargement of profits; and labor nothing but an increasing share in them. This is not an atmosphere in which one who is concerned for the nation's welfare can hope for very much. Yet there is the great fact of the election staring all of us in the face. Our leaders have been told that their concern for the common man, and federal intervention to implement it, is approved. The arguments for states' rights and for the sacredness of certain other institutions, made certainly with extreme emphasis and with the directness of accusation, have been repudiated. The fact of this mandate and this rejection must have its effect on the minds even of die-hard industrialists. Perhaps in time the demand for economic statesmanship will sink in. Perhaps it will be approached with certain face-saving formalities and with appropriate indirection, slowly and awkwardly. As to this I am not sufficiently gifted with prophecy to say.

Rexford G. Tugwell.

Some Bachelors of Art

1.

A young man with a Swiss-cheese complexion
Has taken the upstairs room
With sloping ceilings.

He spends his nights at making words behave;
His afternoons with El-yut;
His mornings sleeping.

Having a father work his way through college,
An aunt remember him in her will,
And a maid to clean his room,

Has left him unembarrassed by his leisure,
Refining an inevitable first line,
"This pain *I* feel—" etc.

2.

We, belly-borne by a mad age
And prisoned in a one-bar cage,
Had planned a reckless get-away:

Around the corner of today
And down the alleyways of years
We ran to contradict the clocks;
Disguised in beards, as pioneers,
Hooded in cowls or sacked in smocks,
Hiding in music, hiding in rhymes,
Bumping our heads against the times;
Escaping always into that
From which we must escape again,
Ran on, suspended from our hats,
Until, spine-spiked and body-bound
In the straitjacket of our skin,
We came, by a revolving door,
To where we started from—and for,

And, in a bottle's belly, drowned.

3.

During the days of our miseducation
We were luck's lads, favorites of The Scheme;
The checks came regular from some relation;
The hours were ours, at College Doubledream.

Then every lad was sure to make his million;
Such things as justice were for worry-wits;
We nursed what thirst was in us for rebellion
At Dr. Dingledine's pink peppertits.

Hurrah for us! a thousand stanch go-getters;
Hail to the bumper Class of '29!
And hail the colors of those letter-sweaters
That keep us warm on winter picket lines.

Howard Nutt.

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"Evgeni Onegin"

In Honor of Pushkin, 1799-1837

ANYONE who has read criticism by foreigners, even well informed criticism, of the literature of his own country knows what a large part of it is likely to be made up of either banalities or errors. In the case of a novice at Russian like the writer, this danger is particularly great; and I shall probably be guilty of many sins in the eyes of Russian readers who should happen to see this essay. But Pushkin, the hundredth anniversary of whose death is being celebrated this year by the Soviets, has in general been so little appreciated in the English-speaking countries that I may, perhaps, be pardoned for however imperfect an attempt to bring his importance home to English-speaking readers. And Evgeni Onegin, who has played such a role for the Russian imagination, really belongs among those figures of fiction who have a meaning beyond their national frontiers for a whole age of Western society. The English Hamlet was as real, and as Russian, to the Russians of the generations that preceded the Revolution as any character in Russian literature. Let us receive Evgeni Onegin as a creation equally real for us.

It has always been difficult for Westerners—except perhaps for the Germans, who seem to have translated him more adequately than anyone else—to believe in the greatness of Pushkin. We have always left him out of account. Coleridge only just knew of his existence; Carlyle described Russia as "mute" three years after Pushkin's death (and while Lermontov was alive); Turgenev struggled vainly with Flaubert to make him recognize Pushkin's excellence, and even Renan was so ignorant of Russian literature that it was possible for him to declare on Turgenev's death that Russia had at last found her voice; Matthew Arnold, in writing about Tolstoy, remarked complacently that "the crown of literature is poetry" and that the Russians had not yet had a great poet, and T. S. Eliot, not long ago, in some discussion of the value of Greek and Latin, was insisting on the inferior educational value of what he regarded as a merely modern literature like Russian, because "half a dozen great novelists" —I quote from memory—"do not make a culture." Even today we tend to say to ourselves, "If Pushkin is really as good as the Russians think he is, why has he never taken his place in world literature as Dante and Goethe have, and as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky have?"

The truth is that Pushkin *has* come through into world literature—he has come through by way of the Russian novel. Unlike most of the poets of his period, he had the real dramatic imagination, and his influence permeates Russian fiction—and theatre and opera as well. Reading Pushkin for the first time to a foreigner who has already read later Russian writers is like coming to Voltaire for the first time after an acquaintance with later French literature: he feels that he is tasting the pure essence of something which he has found before only in combination with other elements: it is a spirit whose presence he has felt and with which in a sense he is already familiar, but of which he now for the the first time knows the face.

For the rest, it is true that the poetry of Pushkin is particularly difficult to translate. It is difficult for the same reason that Dante is difficult: because it says so much in so few words, so clearly and yet so concisely, and the words themselves and their place in the line have become so much more important than in the case of more facile or rhetorical writers. It would require a translator himself a poet of the first order to reproduce Pushkin's peculiar combination of intensity, compression and perfect ease; and none has ever attempted any of his longer pieces in English.[1] A poet like Pushkin may easily sound "flat," as he did to Flaubert in French, just as Cary's translation of Dante sounds flat. Furthermore, the Russian language, which is highly inflected and able to dispense with pronouns and prepositions in many cases where we have to use them and which does without the article altogether, makes it possible for Pushkin to pack his lines (separating modifiers from substantives, if need be) in a way which renders the problem of translating him closer to that of translating a tightly articulated Latin poet like Horace than any modern poet that we know. Such a poet in translation may sound trivial just as many of the translations of Horace sound trivial—because the weight of the words and the force of their relation have been lost with the inflections and the syntax.

So that, failing any kind of translation, we have tended, if we have thought about Pushkin at all, to associate him vaguely with Byronism: we have heard that "Evgeni Onegin" is an imitation of "Don Juan." But this comparison is extremely misleading. Pushkin was a great artist: he derived as much from André Chénier as from Byron. "Don Juan" is diffuse and incoherent, sometimes brilliant, sometimes silly; it has its unique excellence, but it is the excellence of an improvisation. Byron said that he wrote it on gin, and essentially it is a drunken monologue by a desperately restless, un-

[1] This was written without having seen the new translation by Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Babette Deutch, which is reviewed by Max Eastman on page 187 of this issue.

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comfortable man who does not know what is wrong with him or what he ought to do about it and who wants to tell stories about other things or to talk about himself in such a way as to be able to laugh and curse and grieve without looking too closely into anything; Byron's achievement, certainly quite remarkable, is to have raised the drunken monologue to a literary form. But Pushkin's achievement is quite different. Pushkin, to be sure, learned certain things from Byron: he learned, for example, the tone of easy negligence with which "Evgeni Onegin" begins and he learned the habit of personal digression; but both of these devices in Pushkin are made to contribute to a general design. "Evgeni Onegin" is the opposite of "Don Juan" in being a work of unwavering concentration. Pushkin's "novel in verse" came out of Pushkin's deepest self-knowledge and was given form by a long and exacting discipline. Pushkin adopted a compact speech and a complicated stanza-form as different as possible from Byron's doggerel; and he worked over the three hundred and eighty-nine stanzas which fill about two hundred pages through a period of eight years (1823-31) and was still, with every successive edition, revising them and cutting them down up to the time of his death.

One can convey a much more accurate impression of what Pushkin's actual writing is like by comparing him to Keats than to Byron. There are passages in "Evgeni Onegin," such as those that introduce the seasons, which have a felicity and fullness of detail not unlike Keats's "Ode to Autumn" —or, better perhaps, the opening of "The Eve of St. Agnes," which resembles them more closely in form:

> St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
> The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
> The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
> And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
> Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while he told
> His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seem'd taking flight for heaven without a death,
> Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

Here is Pushkin's description of the coming of winter:

> Already now the sky was breathing autumn, already the dear sun more seldom gleamed, shorter grew the day, the forest's secret shadow was stripped away with sighing sound, mist lay upon the fields, the caravan of loud-tongued geese stretched toward the south: drew near the duller season; November stood already at the door.
>
> Rises the dawn in cold murk; in the fields the sound of work is still; the wolf with his hungry mate comes out upon the road; sniffing him, the road-horse snorts—and the traveler who is wise makes full speed up the hill; by morning light the herdsman no longer drives the cattle from the byre; at midday to their huddle his horn no longer calls them; singing in her hut, the farm girl spins, and—friend of winter nights—her little kindling snaps beside her.
>
> And now the heavy frosts are snapping and spread their silver through the fields... smoother than a smart parquet glistens the ice-bound stream. The merry mob of little boys with skates cut ringingly the ice; on small red feet the heavy goose, thinking to float on the water's bosom, steps carefully on the ice, slips and falls; the gay first snow flashes and whirls about, falling like stars on the bank.

If you can imagine this sort of thing, which I have translated more or less literally, done in something like Keats's marrowy line, you will get some idea of what Pushkin is like. He can make us see and hear things as Keats can, but his range is very much greater: he can give us the effect in a few lines of anything from the opening of a bottle of champagne or the loading and cocking of pistols for a duel to the spinning and skipping of a ballet girl—who "flies like fluff from Aeolus's breath"—or the falling of the first flakes of snow. And as soon as we put "The Eve of St. Agnes" (published in 1820) beside "Evgeni Onegin," it seems to us that Keats is weakened by an element of the conventionally romantic, of the mere storybook picturesque. Pushkin has got rid of all that: everything is sharp and real. No detail of country life is too homely, no phase of city life too worldly, for him to master it by the beauty of his verse. Artistically, he has outstripped his time; and neither Tennyson in "In Memoriam" nor Baudelaire in "Les Fleurs du Mal" was ever to surpass Pushkin in making poetry of classical firmness and precision out of a world realistically observed.

I should note also—what I have never seen mentioned—that the passages of social description often sound a good deal more like Praed than like Byron. Praed's verses began coming out in Knight's Quarterly about the time "Evgeni Onegin" was begun and thereafter became immensely fashionable. I suppose that Pushkin, who read English, must have seen them. The stanza in Chapter Two, with its epitaph, on the death of Tatiana's father, sounds as if it had been imitated from Praed's poem, "The Vicar." At any rate, if you can imagine the terse *vers de société* of Praed (Pushkin's measure is shorter than Byron's, a rapid tetrameter like Praed's) as a medium for a novel in verse by a great poet, you will be closer to Pushkin than "Don Juan" will take you:

> Good night to the Season!—the dances,
> The fillings of hot little rooms,
> The glancings of rapturous glances,
> The fancyings of fancy costumes;
> The pleasures which Fashion makes duties,
> The praisings of fiddles and flutes,
> The luxury of looking at Beauties,
> The tedium of talking to Mutes;
> The female diplomatists, planners
> Of matches for Laura and Jane;
> The ice of her Ladyship's manners,
> The ice of his Lordship's champagne.

To have written a novel in verse, and a novel of contemporary manners, which was also a great

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poem, was Pushkin's unprecedented feat—a feat which, though several times attempted by later poets of the nineteenth century, was never to be repeated. And when we think of "Evgeni Onegin" in connection with "Don Juan" or the "Idyls of the King" or "The Ring and the Book" or "Aurora Leigh" or "Evangeline," we find that it refuses even to be classed with them. Pushkin's genius, as Maurice Baring has said, has more in common with the genius of Jane Austen than with the general tradition of the nineteenth-century novel. It is classical in its even tone of comedy which is at the same time so much more serious than the tragedies of Byron ever are, in its grinding of the clear and rounded lens which focuses the whole complex of human relations.

But Pushkin is more vigorous than Jane Austen: the compression and rigor of the verse cause the characters to seem to start right out of the stanzas. And he deals with more violent passions. "Evgeni Onegin" is occupied with Byronism in a different way from that of deriving from Byron: it is among other things an objective study of Byronism. Both in "Evgeni Onegin" and in a letter written while he was working on the poem, Pushkin makes significant criticisms of Byron. "What a man this Shakespeare is!" he writes. "I can't get over it. How small the tragic Byron seems beside him!—that Byron who has been able to imagine but a single character: his own. . . . Byron simply allots to each of his characters some characteristic of his own: his pride to one, his hatred to another, his melancholy to a third, etc., and thus out of a character full, somber and energetic he makes several insignificant characters; but that's not tragedy." And in "Evgeni Onegin," he speaks of Byron's "hopeless egoism." Pushkin has been working away from his early romantic lyricism toward a Shakespearean dramatization of life and now he is to embody in objective creations, to show involved in a balanced conflict, the currents of the age which have passed through him. Evgeni Onegin is presented quite differently from any of the romantic heroes of Byron or Chateaubriand or Musset: when Byron dropped the attitudes of Childe Harold, the best he could do with Don Juan was to give him the innocence of Candide. Evgeni differs even from his immediate successor and kinsman, Lermontov's "Hero of Our Time"—because Lermontov, though he tells his story with the distinctive Russian realism and precision absent in the other romantic writers, is really involved to a considerable degree with the attitude of his hero; whereas Pushkin, in showing us Evgeni Onegin, neither exalts him in the perverse romantic way nor yet, in exposing his weakness, hands him over to conventional morality. There is only one creation of Pushkin's period which is at all comparable to Evgeni: Stendhal's Julien Sorel. And "Evgeni Onegin" must be regarded as not belonging to any of the romantic schools, but as a work of the same order as "Le Rouge et le Noir" and "Madame Bovary."

Our first glimpse of Pushkin's hero is not an ingratiating one: he has just been summoned to the bedside of a dying uncle, whose estate he is going to inherit, and he is cursing at the tiresome prospect of sitting around till the old man dies. But the scene is shifted at once to his previous life in St. Petersburg. He has been a young man about town, who has had everything society can give him. We see him at the restaurant, the opera, the ball; in one masterly passage we are shown him falling asleep after a round of the pleasures of the capital while the Petersburg of the merchants and cabmen and peddlers is just waking up for the day. But Evgeni is intelligent: he gets tired of his friends, tired of his love affairs. He is infected with the "English spleen" and grows languid and morose like Childe Harold. He shuts himself up to write, but he finds it terribly hard and gives it up. Then his uncle dies, and he inherits the estate and goes to live in the country.

The country bores him, too. Being a man of liberal ideas, he tries to lighten the lot of his serfs, and the neighbors decide he is a dangerous fellow. Then there appears in the neighborhood a young man named Lensky with whom Evgeni finds he has something in common. Lensky has just come back from Göttingen and is saturated with German idealism; and he is a poet in the German-romantic vein. Evgeni thinks him callow and naïve, but tries not to throw cold water on his illusions. He likes Lensky, and they go riding and have long arguments together.

Lensky is in love in the most idealistic fashion with a girl whom he has known since childhood and to whom he has always been faithful. She is pretty but entirely uninteresting: Pushkin tells us that she is just like the heroines of all the popular love stories of the day. Lensky goes to see her every evening—she lives with her sister and her widowed mother on a nearby estate—and one day takes Evgeni with him. Evgeni has sarcastically told Lensky in advance what the refreshments and the conversation will be like—it will be a "simple Russian family"; and on the drive back home he remarks that the face of Lensky's worshipped sweetheart is lifeless, red and round "like this silly moon over this silly horizon" and remarks that if *he* were a poet like Lensky, he would have preferred the older sister, who had sat sadly by the window and said nothing.

This older sister, Tatiana, is "wild, melancholy, silent and shy" and not so pretty as Olga. As a child, she didn't like games and hadn't been fond of dolls; she thought it was funny to mimic her mother by lecturing her doll on how young ladies ought to comport themselves. Now her head is full of Richardson and Rousseau, and she likes to get up before dawn and watch the stars fade and the distance grow bright and feel the morning wind. And now, from the first moment she sees him, she falls furiously in love with Evgeni. She waits for a while in silence, then, as Evgeni does not come to call again, she sits down and writes him a letter, in which, pain-

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fully, innocently, uncontrollably, she confesses to him her love. This chapter, which deals with Tatiana's letter, is one of the great descriptions of first love in literature. Pushkin renews for us as we read all the poignancy and violence of those moments when for the first time the emotional forces of youth are released by another human being and try to find their realization through him. All the banal and deluded things that young people say and feel—that Evgeni is the one man in the world for her, the man for whom she has been waiting all her life, that he has been appointed by God to be her protector, that she is all alone and that no one understands her—poor Tatiana believes them all and puts them all into her letter; and Pushkin has succeeded in giving them to us in all their banality and deludedness, with no romantic sentimentalization, and yet making them move us profoundly. We feel with Tatiana as we do with Juliet, yet at the same time Pushkin has set the whole picture in a perspective of pathetic irony which is not in that early play of Shakespeare's: there is nothing to indicate that Shakespeare's lovers might not have been ideally happy if it had not been for the family feud; but, in the case of Tatiana, we know from the first moment that her love is hopelessly misplaced in Evgeni. And the whole thing is set off and rooted in life by a series of marvelous touches—Tatiana's conversation with the nurse, the song she hears the serf-girls singing—and saturated with the atmosphere of the country estate where Tatiana has spent her whole life and where—so amazing is Pushkin's skill at evoking a complete picture through suggestion, needing only a few hundred lines where a novelist would take as many pages—we feel by the time she leaves it that we have lived as long as she.

Evgeni does not answer the letter, but two days afterwards he comes to see her. The role of the seducer is *passé:* it went out with periwigs and red heels; and the day for great passions with Evgeni is past: it is too much trouble to do anything about Tatiana. He conducts himself honorably, he talks to her kindly. He tells her that, if he had any desire for family life, she would certainly be the woman he would choose for a wife. But he was not created for happiness, he has a strange soul. As a husband, he would be gloomy and disagreeable, and he would eventually cease to love her. He makes quite a long speech about it. And he tells her that she ought to learn to control herself: another man might not understand as he does. Tatiana listens silently, in tears. He gives her his arm and leads her back to the house.

But now Evgeni takes an unexpected turn. There is a big Saint's-Day party at Tatiana's. Evgeni goes and sits opposite Tatiana and realizes that she is still in love with him and frightened to death in his presence. He thinks that he is angry with Lensky because the party has turned out a bore and Lensky has brought him there on false pretenses. He has for months been watching Lensky moon over Olga with his eternal romantic devotion which treats the beloved object with a reverence almost religious and never makes any practical advances; and he sets out now to annoy the young poet by getting Olga away from him for the evening. He makes Olga dance with him repeatedly, pays her animated attentions—to which, as she is incapable of saying no, she almost automatically responds. Lensky is deeply hurt and furious; he leaves the party and goes straight home and writes Evgeni a note calling him out.

Evgeni's first impulse, when he receives the challenge, is to set things right with Lensky, not to let the young man make a fool of himself. But then he is moved, as he tells himself, by the fear of public opinion: the second by whom Lensky has sent the challenge, though a thoroughly disreputable individual, is an old-fashioned fancier and promoter of duels. The night before they are to meet, Lensky sits up till morning writing poetry; Evgeni sleeps sound and late; he arrives on the field with his French valet, whom he insolently presents as his second. He and Lensky take their four paces away from each other. But Evgeni, while he walks, is quietly raising his pistol, so that, when he turns, he is able to shoot Lensky before the latter has had a chance to aim. Lensky falls: in a remarkable simile, characteristically realistic and exact, Pushkin tells us how Lensky's heart, in which a moment before all the human passions had dwelt, becomes like an abandoned house in which all is silent and dark, with the windows covered with chalk and the shutters closed and the owner gone away. Evgeni has killed in the most cowardly fashion a man whose friend he had believed himself to be and whom he had thought he did not want to kill at all. Now at last we are sure of what Pushkin, who has always given us Evgeni's version of his own motives, has only in various ways suggested: that, for all Lensky's obtuseness and immaturity, Evgeni has been jealous of him, because Lensky has been able to feel for Olga an all-absorbing emotion whereas Evgeni, loved so passionately by Tatiana, has been unable to feel anything at all. Lensky, Pushkin now tells us, might or might not have become a good poet; but the point is, as he lets us know without telling us, that it is the poet in Lensky whom Evgeni has hated. Evgeni had wanted to write; but when he had sat down with the paper before him, he had found he had nothing to express.

Evgeni, after the duel, leaves the countryside. Olga very soon forgets Lensky and says yes to an uhlan, who takes her off with him when he goes to join his regiment. Tatiana is left alone. She walks over to Evgeni's house and gets the caretaker to let her in; and there she returns day after day and reads the books, so much more up to date than Richardson and Rousseau, which she has found in Evgeni's library. There is a picture of Byron on the wall and, for the first time, Tatiana reads Byron, as well as several fashionable novels which reflect the fashionable attitudes of the day. Evgeni has

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marked them and made notes in the margin: and now the speech he delivered to her begins to sound to her like an echo of all the things he has read.

But Tatiana continues to languish, doesn't get married. Her mother decides to take her to Moscow. There follows a wonderful description of the Larin family traveling to Moscow. Pushkin, with his infinite sympathy and his equally universal detachment, puts on record customs and characteristics of the Russians which are still striking to a foreigner today. The Larins set several dates to get off, but they never get off on those dates. Then at last they do get off and get there. Now the leafy and mazy and timeless estate is far behind Tatiana and she sees the gold crosses of the churches and then the people and shops and palaces of Moscow. The shift from country to town is beautifully handled by Pushkin; and there is nothing in fiction more remarkable in its way than the account of Tatiana's first day in Moscow. It is the forerunner of the social scenes in "War and Peace," and Natasha Rostova and her family seem related to Tatiana and hers, just as Tolstoy's Moscow originals must have been to Pushkin's. The Moscow cousin to whose house Tatiana and her mother first go and where an old Kalmuck in a ragged caftan and spectacles lets them in, had been in love before she was married with a dandy whom she had thought another Sir Charles Grandison; and now the first thing she says to Tatiana's mother, in whom she had used to confide, is, "Cousin, do you remember Grandison?" "What Grandison? Oh, Grandison!—of course, I remember: where is he?" "He's living in Moscow; he came to see me at Christmas; he married off his son not long ago."—And now the fashion—we are not told whether or not Tatiana makes this reflection—is for Byron instead of Grandison.

Tatiana cannot at first take her place in this world. Her cousins, though urban, are nice; they look her over and decide she is nice. They confide in her, but she cannot return their confidences: she goes among them detached, distracted. Her grandparents all invite her to dinner: " 'How Tanya has grown!' they say. 'Wasn't it just the other day I christened you? And *I* used to carry you in my arms! And *I* boxed your ears! And *I* used to feed you gingerbread!' And the old ladies in chorus would keep repeating: 'How our years fly by!'—But they —in them she could see no change; it was all on the same old pattern: her aunt, the Princess Helena, still had the same tulle bonnet; Lukerya Lvovna still put on the same powder, Lyubov Petrovna still told the same lies, Ivan Petrovich was still just as silly, Semen Petrovich was still just as stingy, Pelagya Nikolavna still had the same friend, M. Finemouche, and the same Pomeranian and the same husband; and her husband was just as punctual at his club and just as meek and just as deaf as ever, and still ate and drank enough for two." One night at a ball, her solicitous aunts whispered to her to look to the left. An important-looking general was staring at her. "Who?" she said. "That fat general?"

When Evgeni came back after long absence and went into society again, he saw at a ball an extraordinarily smart lady who combined perfect naturalness with great dignity, whom everybody sought after and to whom everybody deferred, and he gasped at her resemblance to Tatiana. He asked a man he knew who she was. "My wife," replied the friend. It is Tatiana, now a princess; the man is the fat general. Tatiana meets Evgeni without batting an eyelash: she asks him whether he has been long in St. Petersburg and whether he doesn't come from her part of the country.

Evgeni pays her court, follows her everywhere; but she refuses to recognize him. He writes her a letter, which is the counterpart of hers: now it is he who throws himself on her mercy. She doesn't answer: he writes again and again. Then he shuts himself up in his house and sees no one and does a lot of serious reading: he reads history and solid social treatises. But Lensky gets between him and the page, and he hears a voice that says, "What, killed?" and he sees all the malicious gossips and the mean cowards and the young bitches and jilts whom he has known in society and whom he has wanted to get away from and forget, and he sees Tatiana in the country house, sitting silent at the window, as on the day when he first called.

Suddenly, one day when the winter snow is melting, he gets into his sleigh and drives off to her house. There is no one in the hall: he walks in. He finds her reading his letters. He throws himself at her feet. She looks at him without anger or surprise; she sees how sick and pitiful he is; the girl who loved him so in the country wakens again in her heart; she does not take her hand from his lips. Then, after a moment, she makes him get up. "I must be frank with you," she says. "Do you remember in the orchard how submissively I listened to your rebuke? Now it's my turn. I was younger then, and better. I loved you, and you were severe with me. The love of a humble country girl was not exciting for you. Good heavens! my blood still chills when I remember the cold look and the sermon you gave me. You didn't like me then in the country, and why do you run after me now? Because I'm rich and well known? because my husband has been wounded on the battlefield? because we're in favor at court? Isn't it because my shame would now be known to everybody, and would give you a reputation as a rake? Don't you think I would a thousand times rather be back with the orchard and my books and the places where I first saw you and the graveyard with my nurse's grave, than play this role in this noisy masquerade? But there's nothing to be done now. What did I care what happened to me? And now you're a man of honor; and though I love you still—why should I pretend?—I've given myself to another and I shall always be faithful to him."

She goes; and Evgeni stands thunderstruck, and then he hears the clank of the general's spurs. And there Pushkin leaves him. The truth about Evgeni's

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fatal weakness has for the first time fully been driven home in Tatiana's speech: he has never been able to judge for himself of the intrinsic value of anything; all his values are social values; he has had enough independence, he has been enough superior to his associates, to be dissatisfied with the life of society, but, even in his disaffection, he has only been able to fall into the fashionable disaffected attitude; his misanthropy itself has been developed in terms of what people will think of him, and, even escaping from the capital into the country, he has brought the standards of society with him. He had been genuine enough to know that there was something in Tatiana, something noble about her passion for him, to recognize in his heart that it was she who was the true brooding and unquiet spirit, the true rebel against the conventions, where his quarrel with the world was half a pose; but he had not been genuine enough to love her as she was: he had only been able to shoot Lensky.

Pushkin has put into the relations between his three central characters a number of implications. In one sense, they may be said to represent three intellectual currents of the time: Evgeni is Byronism turning dry and worldly; Lensky, with his Schiller and Kant, German romantic idealism; Tatiana, that Nature of Rousseau which was breaking through in romantic poetry, speaking a new language and asserting a new kind of rights. And from another point of view they represent different tendencies in Russia itself: both Evgeni and Lensky are half foreigners, they think in terms of the cultures of the West, whereas Tatiana, who has spent her whole life on the wild old feudal estate, is for Pushkin the real Russia. Tatiana, like Pushkin, who said he owed so much to the stories of his Russian nurse, has always loved old wives' tales and is full of country superstitions. Before the fatal Saint's-Day party and after her conversation with Onegin, she has an ominous dream, which is recounted at length. Tatiana's subconscious insight, going to the bottom of the situation and clothing it with the imagery of folk-tales, reveals to her a number of things which the others do not yet know about themselves: that there is something bad about Evgeni and that there is an antagonism between him and Lensky; in her dream, she sees Onegin stab Lensky. It is the simple Russian soul with its deep comprehension of the hidden realities of life, to which Tolstoy and Dostoevsky were still later on trying to return in their reaction away from Western civilization. Yet with Pushkin, as Gide says of Dostoevsky, the symbols are perfectly embodied in the characters; they never deform the human being or convert him into an uninteresting abstraction. "Evgeni Onegin" has been popular because it has for generations been read by young Russians as a story—a story in which the eternal reasoning male is brought up against the eternal instinctive woman—like Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy; and in which the woman—who, besides, is Cinderella and ends up beautifully dressed and with the highest social position—gets morally all the best of it.

But there is still another aspect which the characters in "Evgeni Onegin" present. Pushkin speaks, at the end, of the years which have elapsed since he first saw Evgeni dimly, before the "free novel" which was to shape itself could be discerned "through the magic crystal." This magic crystal was Pushkin's own mind, which figures in the poem in a peculiar way. The poet, when he talks about himself, is not willful and egoistic like Byron; his digressions, unlike Byron's and Sterne's, always contribute to the story: they will begin by sounding like asides, in which the author is merely growing garrulous on the subject of some personal experience, but they will eventually turn out to merge into the experience of one of his characters, which he has been filling in in this indirect way. Yet the crystal sphere is always there: it is inside it that we see the drama. Pushkin, throughout this period, had been tending to get away from his early subjective lyricism and to produce a more objective kind of art. After "Evgeni Onegin," he was to write principally stories in prose. And in "Evgeni Onegin" it is almost as if we had watched the process—as we can see in the life-cell the nucleus splitting up into its separate nuclei and each concentrating its filaments and particles about it—by which the several elements of his character, the several currents of his experience, have taken symmetry about the foci of distinct characters. Pushkin had finally transfused himself into a dramatic work of art as none other of his romantic generation had done—for his serenity, his perfect balance of tenderness for human beings with unrelenting respect for reality, show a rarer quality of mind than Stendhal's.

Yet "Evgeni Onegin," for all its lucidity, all its objectification, is perhaps not really much less desperate than the conflicts of forces presented more hysterically in the work of the other romantics. I am not sure it is not worse than poor Byron dying of fever, with "Don Juan" unfinished, in the effort to do something for Greek freedom. For, after all, the chief tragedy of "Evgeni Onegin" is not Evgeni's chagrin or Lensky's death: it is that Tatiana should have been caught up irrevocably by that empty and tyrannical social world from which Evgeni had tried to escape and which she had felt and still feels so alien. Pushkin tried to continue "Evgeni Onegin," but found that he could not do it; and five years afterwards, before he was yet out of his thirties, having married the same year that "Onegin" was finished a young and very social wife who had submerged him in social life and expenses, he managed to get himself killed in a duel by a man whom he suspected of paying her attentions. It was as if in those generations where Byron, Shelley, Keats, Leopardi and Poe were dead in their thirties or barely reached forty, where Coleridge and Wordsworth and Beddoes and Musset burned out while still alive, where Lermontov, like Pushkin, was killed in a duel before he was twenty-seven—

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it was as if in that great age of the bourgeois ascendancy it were impossible for a poet to survive. There was for the man of imagination and moral passion a basic maladjustment to society in which only the student of society—the social philosopher, the historian, the novelist—could find himself and learn to function.

Yet Pushkin, who had done for the Russian language what Dante had done for Italian and who had laid the foundations of Russian fiction, had, in opposing the natural humanity of Tatiana to the social values of Evgeni, set a theme which was to be developed through the whole of Russian art and thought, and to give it its peculiar power. Lenin, like Tolstoy, could only have been possible in a world where this contrast was acutely felt. Tatiana, left by Pushkin with the last word, was actually to remain triumphant. EDMUND WILSON.

Hopeful Catalonia

IN THE six weeks since my last visit, Barcelona has transformed itself wellnigh beyond recognition. Superficially all remains as I had left it. Middle-class idlers in good clothes still fill the cafés on the *ramblas,* sipping coffee or *manzanilla* and thinking their own thoughts. The streets were never gayer, more alive or safer. And the lovely city is as bustling, as vivid, as colorful as it was in mid-September, as charming as when I first beheld it five years ago. But the appearances are deceptive. Under the skin nothing is as it was.

In strict accuracy even the surface has changed. The madly careening cars which a few weeks ago thundered up and down the thoroughfares brimming with men and girls in uniform, to terrify the pedestrian, have vanished from the scene. Except for public buildings scarcely a flag of any color is seen. Durruti's sensible words—"Arms were meant to combat fascists, not to parade with in city streets"—have served to clear the air. The romantic phase of the Catalonian revolution is over. The Barcelonese have waked up to the perils and realities of the Spanish civil war. Not that enthusiasm and the immense faith have suffered the least diminution. Quite the contrary. Only enthusiasm is now tempered by self-discipline, and confidence by determination.

When I was here in midsummer Barcelona was the seat of half a dozen separate and independent governments, each with a full complement of departments, bureaus and subdivisions of its own, and each in constant and acute rivalry with all the others. The least authoritative of the lot was the Generalitat, that is to say, the official government of Catalonia. The central power sitting in Madrid? That was but the shadow of a shadow. If you wanted to enlist, or find a place in the bureaucracy, or a permit to travel, or preferential treatment at the hands of the censorship, the last place you thought of applying was the exquisite palace on the Plaza de la República or any of its annexes. At the frontier it was the Anti-Fascist Militia Committee that examined your papers—the official police merely rubberstamped them when told to do so—and approved or rejected your application for entry. If, upon arrival in Barcelona, you naïvely did address yourself to the nominal authorities, you soon had it brought home to you that they could be of but little use to you.

The real business ordinarily associated with the state was performed elsewhere. The Hotel Colón, for instance, headquarters of the United Socialist Party, was a Smolny Institute on a reduced scale, a center of power where nearly all the functions of government save the coining of money were performed, and the only limitations upon whose sovereignty were those set by a series of other Smolny Institutes, that of the Cambo Building (which now housed the National Confederation of Labor and the Iberian Anarchist Federation), that of the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (P.O.U.M.), and several other lesser-party seats.

"Unity" and "Solidarity" were on every lip, but calling at these various centers, one had a distressing sensation that each of the trade-union federations and political parties was thinking primarily of its own prestige and advantage. Each, in scarcely veiled terms, held the others responsible for the military uprising, for the losses of the anti-fascist forces, for the advance of the enemy. Each charged the others with subordinating the common cause of the revolution and of the people to sectarian prejudice, of preferring defeat to the smallest ideological concession, of acts not to be distinguished from deliberate betrayal. So keen was this rivalry, so intense the friction, that not only hostile critics, not only detached observers, but the best friends of republican Spain came away feeling that the various factions were only waiting for the victory of the militarists to fall upon each other. An incident now and then, like the assassination of the controller of the port of Barcelona, supported this interpretation.

The P.S.U.C. (the Communist-Socialist group) hardly made a secret of its mistrust and hatred of the P.O.U.M. and of its conviction that this Trotsky-inspired body was, consciously or not, a tool of the counter-revolution. In the P.O.U.M. the Third International was said to be petty-bourgeois reformist or menshevik, to have no real interest in the heroic struggle of the Spanish workers, to be a mere agent of the Moscow foreign office. And quarrels among the Marxists seemed but friendly

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teasing when compared with the chronic and violent hostility between the Marxist labor federation, the U.G.T., and its dynamic and powerful rival, the Bakuninist C.N.T. Anarchism, one was told at the Karl Marx Center on the Paseo de Gracia, was the curse of Spain and the nightmare of Catalonia. It was an element of division and discord among the workers. With its amorphous organization, its loose doctrine, its reckless, naïve, unscientific tactics, it was a source of constant provocation to organized capital and of disaster to the proletariat. The very daring and foolhardy bravery of its followers and their contempt of discipline disposed them to engage in ill considered and ill prepared strikes, and made them an easy prey to spies and *agents provocateurs*. In the present crisis these inherent defects of the anarchist mentality were a danger of the gravest sort to the cause of the workers. Since everyone was now obliged to possess a trade-union card, and since the U.G.T. subjected applicants for membership to the most rigid tests, the C.N.T., thanks to its boasted liberalism, its naïve faith in the goodness of mankind, became the refuge of all the camouflaged fascists and militarists who had failed to make their getaway. Nevertheless, the Marxists were not despairing. The C.N.T. workers, they intimated, had waked up to the inadequacy and perils of the anarcho-syndicalist ideology. The more intelligent of them, it was said, were, since July, coming over in large numbers to the U.G.T.; "the remainder, once the military sedition had been repressed, would have to be got rid of somehow."

In the offices of the Solidaridad Obrera and at the headquarters of the C.N.T.-F.A.I. (pronounced Saynaytay-Fie) one was no less critical of Marxism and Marxists for being somewhat more temperate. The bolsheviks, to be sure, had made a successful proletarian revolution in Russia—at the cost of liberty and justice to the proletariat. But the Third International—and the Second also—had made a tragic fiasco of everything they touched everywhere else. And the Communist contempt for liberty had furnished the fascists with the slogans and repressive ruthlessness which they have applied with such deadly effect in Hungary, Italy, Germany and elsewhere. After these triumphs of Communist leadership, after this record of twenty years of disillusion and disaster, the Marxists had the impudence to set themselves up as the sole qualified guides of the workers in their struggle for liberation! The tale about fascist infiltration into the C.N.T. was too absurd to deserve a denial. Before any worker could have his application considered in a C.N.T. union he must be recommended by two members in good standing, and he was not definitely admitted until an investigating committee reported favorably on his character and record.

Marxists and Bakunists alike ignored the Esquerra and the Estat Catala (the two middle-class parties) and tolerated the "phantom government" of the Generalitat as a harmless heritage of the past —the Anarchists out of a certain personal affection for President Companys, whose legal services to the C.N.T. under the monarchy and the reaction were not to be forgotten, the Marxists for tactical and foreign-political reasons.

This was the political scene in Catalonia during the first half of September. Returning toward the end of October, I have difficulty in believing that I am in the same country. A second revolution, but a silent and bloodless one, has occurred during the few weeks' interval. It is, as a matter of fact, still in progress. On the Sunday (October 25) following my arrival, I was present at the great mass meeting in the Plaza Monumental bull-ring. It was held to celebrate the accord signed a few days earlier between the two labor federations and their respective political affiliates. Nominally the agreement settles long standing differences over the collectivization of commerce and industry and the municipalization of the land. In reality it may be said to be nothing less than a far-reaching offensive and defensive alliance, a treaty of perpetual friendship that approaches the frontiers of union. A more stirring and emotional assemblage could hardly be imagined. The vast circle, in which some 75,000 workers were gathered, was a riot of red and red-and-black bunting festooned together. The speakers had tears in their eyes as they viewed the unprecedented scene and recalled by way of contrast the long and unhappy discords which for decades divided the two great proletarian bodies of Spain. During pauses, their remarks were punctuated with shouts from the Anarchist bleachers of *"Viva la U.G.T.,"* and from the Marxist side of *"Viva la C.N.T."* It was a memorable event in the history of the labor movement.

The Hotel Colón, such a humming bee-hive a few weeks ago, has gone into a decline. The former "Smolny Institute" has returned to its previous functions. It is a hotel again—not the stopping place of nobles and foreign millionaires that it was before the revolution—a sleeping and eating and information center for militiamen on leave, for party officials and the like. The waiting rooms and offices, where formerly hundreds waited to see the leading figures of the new order, are all but deserted. Scarcely a personality of first or even of third rank is to be found there any more. And what I say of the Colón holds true in equal measure for the Cambo Building (the C.N.T.-F.A.I. offices), for the Karl Marx house on the Paseo de Gracia and for the P.O.U.M. headquarters on the Rambla. The Trotskyist leader Nín is Minister of Justice. Comorera, the secretary of the P.S.U.C., is Minister of Public Works. Fábregas and two other C.N.T. men are at the head, respectively, of the departments of public economy, food supplies and health. Toryho, the brilliant editor of Solidaridad Obrera, is in the commissariat of propaganda. And so on all along the line. The talents from all the parties and groups are pooling their efforts and

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their capacities to defeat the counter-revolution and to help in the birth of the new society.

The prestige of the Generalitat has risen from its own ashes, rejuvenated and immeasurably strengthened. But it is a new Generalitat which shares nothing but its name with that of a few weeks ago. The change goes infinitely deeper than personalities and party labels. The revolution to which I alluded signifies that Catalonia has given itself not simply a new administration but a new regime. The parliamentary-geographical state of last summer has been replaced—without strife, without disorder, with scarcely a wrench—by something which in round terms may be called the Revolutionary Council of Public Safety. The Anarchists are perhaps not unjustified when they maintain that, far from compromising with their principles and ideals, they have, in joining with other workers to assure the victory of the revolution, fulfilled the aims for which their much misunderstood organization has always striven.

No less significant is the change that has taken place in the attitude of Catalonia toward Madrid. In September one had the feeling in conversing with people hereabouts that Catalonia was an ally rather than an integral part of Spain. Catalonian detachment—call it autonomism, federalism, or what you will—was the one political article of faith shared by all the left parties of the country, not excluding the Anarchists. Remarkably enough, it is precisely today when Castile, the ancient oppressor, struggling for its own survival, is helpless to prevent Catalonian independence, that this obstinate separatist becomes keenly alive to the Iberian bond it has for centuries so violently disowned.

How is this brusque and many-sided reorientation to be accounted for? In the political lobbies of Barcelona it is being whispered that the firm stand of the U.S.S.R. on non-intervention and its tardy but vigorous measures to break through the blockade which came so near to strangling the republic, had more than a little to do with Catalonia's change of outlook. Furthermore, in the early days of the civil war the Catalonians looked for miracles. A miracle had saved them on July 19. Why should not more and bigger ones follow? Preoccupied with social reconstruction, remote from the main war theatre, traditionally mistrustful of Madrid, it was perhaps not unnatural for the Catalonians to fall into the unrealistic error of believing that their glorious and bloody victory over the militarists had definitely and finally liberated them not only from the *Putschists* but from the ancient bondage of the central authority as well. Again, the fantasy somehow gained currency that, whatever might happen to the rest of the Peninsula, the "democratic Powers," with France at their head, would demand the exemption of Catalonia as the price of their "neutrality." But as week followed week and victory receded farther and farther, a spirit of sober realism came to possess even the most naïve. Not despair, nor so much as discouragement—the faith of the republicans in the ultimate triumph of their cause is the outstanding characteristic of this tragic war—but a dawning of the evident enough truth that not alone the social revolution but the political freedom of Catalonia itself stood or fell with Spain as a whole.

The progress of the war was not without influence, also, in hastening and extending the accord between the two labor federations. So long as central and western Spain were holding their own, the Marxist trade unions and political party at least held the balance of power. With the tightening of the vise round the capital, Catalonia and the Levante, with their powerful C.N.T., suddenly acquired a vastly increased importance. It became certain that without the wholehearted support of the Anarchists there could now be no hope of victory. If the P.O.U.M., which is on the most excellent terms with the C.N.T.-F.A.I., be added to the scales, the decisive factor belonged to the extreme left. In these circumstances there was no course open to the U.G.T.-P.S.U.C. but to come to terms with their old rivals.

Well informed opinion hereabouts is that the recent entente between the two federations will grow closer as time goes on and that at all events the danger of inter-proletarian strife is definitely exorcised. But that minor frictions have not been wholly eliminated, that many adjustments still remain to be made, is evident from a variety of incidents. The resistance of the Anarchists to the militarization of the militia, or at any rate to a certain aspect of it, is a case in point. It was perhaps too much to expect that, after three months of sovereign independence, the C.N.T. would unconditionally submit to authority, even though that authority be a revolutionary one and in part composed of Anarchists. In receiving the press some weeks ago President Companys was obliged to make a gentle allusion to the fact that there were still too many committees, groups and delegates to interfere with the smooth running of the country's affairs. In a slightly firmer tone he added: "Either the Council must be allowed to direct the affairs of Catalonia in these trying hours, or else it must be relieved of responsibility for them."

On the frontier again the police and the militia seem not to have been informed of the changed relationship with Madrid. For when I arrived at Port-Bou the other day I found to my surprise that a letter from Luis Araquistain, the Spanish ambassador in Paris, carried so little weight that if I had not had a card from the Friends of the Soviet Union I would have been in some danger of not being allowed to go on. To my objection the militiaman quietly remarked: "Señor Araquistain is not our ambassador, he is the envoy of Madrid." Trifles these, perhaps, but not without significance in throwing some light on the problems that still face this country before victory can become possible.

Barcelona. M. E. RAVAGE.

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Washington Notes

The President and a Constitutional Amendment—The Dutchess County Democrat—A Checkrein on Big Business

WHETHER or not a constitutional amendment is to be voted at the January session of Congress appears to be strictly up to Mr. Roosevelt. The radical forces of the country chose to fight under Mr. Roosevelt's banner in the last election, and they now have no other leader. If the administration should decide to turn thumbs down on a constitutional amendment, Senator La Follette could not muster a large enough following to protest effectively; neither could Senator Lundeen. For the time being, at any rate, the radicals in Congress must follow wherever Mr. Roosevelt leads.

In what direction is Mr. Roosevelt headed? The Washington correspondents of conservative newspapers, notably Mr. Arthur Krock of The New York Times, are hopefully predicting he will turn to the Right. Such hopes are based on the conferences Mr. Roosevelt had with business leaders before leaving for Buenos Aires. It is quite true that Mr. Roosevelt showed great amiability in these interviews. However, to my mind, the notion that Mr. Roosevelt will now turn either Left or Right comes from a misconception of his character.

I have watched Mr. Roosevelt at fairly close range for four years. I have become increasingly convinced that his presto-change, white-rabbit manifestations are unimportant. The main body of his policies seems to me extraordinarily consistent, and, moreover, largely explicable in terms of his early environment and upbringing.

Peter Arno clubmen and dowagers, during the last four years, have been accustomed to call Mr. Roosevelt a traitor to his class. It is undeniable that Mr. Roosevelt's father was primarily a *rentier*, a man who sat quietly on boards of directors, conserved his investments and took long holidays in Europe. This, however, is to miss entirely the character of Franklin Roosevelt's inheritance. His father was a *rentier,* but he was also a Dutchess County, New York, Democrat, which is a special sort of animal.

Dutchess County is Republican in the same degree that Mecca is Mohammedan. It has always been Republican. Although Mr. Roosevelt managed to carry his own election district in 1936, the county went for Landon. For the Roosevelts to have remained Democrats, or unbelievers, in Dutchess County denotes a degree of social independence bordering on subversiveness.

Tradition in Mr. Roosevelt's family is stronger than in most American families. The Roosevelts have always been well-to-do; they have not moved around much, and family treasures—books, records, furniture and jewelry—have descended from generation to generation. When the President talked about Tories and economic royalists in his Philadelphia acceptance speech, he could do so with natural emotion, for he has a real and vivid sense of kinship with his great-great-grandfather, Isaac, who espoused the side of the colonists during the American Revolution and was persecuted by the New York Tories in consequence.

The Roosevelts were always Democrats. However, at the time of the Civil War, the Long Island part of the family—the Theodore Roosevelt branch—turned Republican. In contrast, the Hyde Park branch stayed loyal to the North, but unshakably Democratic. This has a certain importance in view of the countless unkind digs that Franklin has received from T.R. Jr. and Mrs. Longworth. To the Hyde Park Roosevelts, their Oyster Bay relatives are simply deserters from the faith, bandwagon jumpers. It is entirely probable that the attacks of T.R. Jr. and Mrs. Longworth have served to strengthen Franklin's family pride in the Democratic Party.

One further point needs to be made. While the members of Franklin Roosevelt's family have been Democrats, they have always been stoutly anti-Tammany. Franklin's father, Mr. James Roosevelt, was a friend of Cleveland and supported him against Tammany's vicious assaults. When young Franklin, just elected to the New York legislature, jumped into the anti-Tammany fight then centering around the election of Senator O'Gorman, he was following out the family tradition with exactness.

What political ideas would a boy have picked up at the Hyde Park estate? He obviously would have seen himself as a member of the owning class. But during political campaigns, he would have noticed that his father talked differently, and believed in different things, from the Dutchess County neighbors. He would have learned that Mr. Cleveland was a fine man. (Mr. James Roosevelt once took small Franklin to call on Mr. Cleveland at the White House.) He would have learned that Mr. Cleveland's enemies, the Republicans, were under the thumb of big business men, who wanted to buy the government for their own selfish profit. He would also have learned that part of the Democratic Party, the Tammany Hall men, were quite as bad as the Republicans.

I think it can be shown that Mr. Roosevelt's present policies conform very accurately to this early twig-bending. With the N.R.A., Mr. Roosevelt was probably over his depth. The N.R.A. represented Messrs. Swope and Baruch and General Johnson far more than it did Mr. Roosevelt. But subsequent administration measures, the abortive "anti-bigness" tax bill of 1935, the corporate-surplus tax bill of 1936, the holding-company bill, the reform of the Federal Reserve Board, the national labor-relations act—all these are direct attempts to break the power of Republican big business. The F.E.R.A., the W.P.A., the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Farm Credit and Resettlement Administrations, are efforts to bring direct, temporary aid to the victims of Republican big business. The significant thing about these measures, however, is that they are wholly in our recent political tradition. Not even the T.V.A., as it is now being administered, looks forward to a change in the social order. In one way or another, Mr. Roosevelt proposes to restrain Republican big business, just as every Democratic President has set out to restrain it. There is no indication, however, that Mr. Roosevelt has plans of any more far-reaching character.

What light does this throw on the prospects for a constitutional amendment? It is clear that a great deal will depend on whether the Supreme Court throws out the holding-company act in the Electric Bond and Share case.

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If, in Mr. Roosevelt's eyes, the Supreme Court continues to be an instrument of big-business control, he will act. That seems almost certain. But it seems equally certain that he will agree to accept an amendment covering the narrowest possible ground—probably one enlarging the present construction of the interstate-commerce clause. Such an amendment would probably serve to validate the holding-company act and the national labor-relations act, and perhaps would permit an attenuated form of minimum-wage law. This is as far ahead as the President's mind seems to run.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Are We Due for a Stock-Market Boom?—Manipulation and Price-Pegging Lag—A Test for the S.E.C.

FROM EVERY quarter whence the wind blows the straws come drifting in telling of the coming rosy days ahead. And particularly is this so in the stock market. And of course those who have left in their tin boxes remnants of the last boom listen eagerly for the approach of the next one in the hope of recovering some substantial part of what they lost. What is Wall Street going to do? Are stocks going to soar again? What is the S.E.C. going to do about it and what is Wall Street going to do about the S.E.C.? These questions will be answered by time. But there are elements around, which have a bearing on the situation.

First of all, why is it that, in the very midst of the premonitory excitement preceding this looked-for stock boom, seats on the Curb market should actually decline in price? Why is it that seats on the New York Stock Exchange are selling now for no more than they fetched eighteen months ago when trading volume was less than half its present size?

Trading, to be sure, has been brisk and prices have risen. In March, 1935, the market prices of fifty stocks as figured by The New York Times was 77.92. Now they are around 141—practically twice as much. But one important factor is missing. Of course there is a certain amount of manipulation in the market. And there is even more price pegging. But it is slight and unimportant compared with what went on in 1924 to 1929.

In those days the bulk of the manipulative activity was carried on in connection with new stock issues and in secondary distributions of large stock holdings. The bankers were issuing huge floods of new shares—merger shares, reorganizations, shares mostly of holding companies and finance companies. Of course the insiders got those shares through the stratagem of the "preferred list" and then began the market operation to push the price up and unload them on the public. Then the market swarmed with big and little operators gathering in blocks of stocks in all sorts of companies under options and then giving the market a quick jiggle and the customers a quick rooking. There were always a couple of score of such operations under way on the big board and at least as many on the Curb, plus the floor operations like those of Case (J. I.), which went on endlessly, plus the continuous pegging and boosting operations on exchanges everywhere by the investment-trust and utility bankers of the new shares they were feeding out to our great people.

But none of this is now visible in any extensive way. The reasons are perhaps several. But the chief reason is that the bankers have been issuing no shares and hence there have been no new shares to play with in distributing operations—like Allegheny and United Corporation and others.

If you read newspaper headlines you might get the notion that security issues are rising rapidly. But this is not truly so. Thus in a single month one reads that $92,000,000 worth of shares have been registered for issuance by the S.E.C. But on examination you find that only a handful of them are for immediate issuance and these are mostly unimportant little issues by corporations whose shares are not traded in.

Why are the bankers not issuing new shares? Well, why are not commercial banks making loans? The answer is chiefly that those who have credit do not want to borrow and those who want to borrow have no credit. There is not only no market for new securities but there are apparently no adventurers or enterprises wishing to issue them.

As for the secondary distribution projects—apparently the time is not yet ripe in the first place, and second, the S.E.C. has doubtless produced a little caution. There has been secondary distribution, all right. But it has not been riotous. It has been accomplished in most cases without actual manipulation or anything more than the mere pegging of prices.

People are still cautious. Brokers are cautious. And the people who accumulated large blocks of shares have done fairly well easing them off as prices rose without putting their necks into an unknown and untested halter.

The boom may come but it is not here yet. The three important barometers of this still remain languid—bank loans, new corporate financing and private construction. But it would not be true to say they are motionless. Private construction has risen, but only slightly. There is an increase in residential construction, but it is trivial. It will have to be at least twice what it is before it will become important. The total for the whole year is hardly so much as the government spends in two months on relief. The actual total of building seems good, but if the public-works item is taken out it loses its impressive appearance.

New security issues for the first eight months of this year were $3,300,000,000. That looks like a great deal. But on analysis it turns out that only $250,000,000 represent securities issued to bring fresh funds into industry and, of course, even these may not be sold. They have merely been registered.

Until these three sectors of the business world get under way, the boom will have to wait. And it is because they have not yet gotten under way in any real sense that the stock markets fail to recover their old buoyance and activity.

However, as indicated, these sectors do show signs of returning life. Maybe they will come fully to life. When they do we will be able to test whether or not the S.E.C. can do anything effective about the market. Of course I believe the S.E.C. can do something effective if it will use the instrumentalities which the law puts into its hands.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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The Bandwagon

"I'll give you $1,000 if you can find more than 600 men, other than representatives of the company, in the shops," Mr. Bendix said. A request to be admitted to the plant to count the men and women there was denied.—*News item in The New York Times.*

If the whole show rolled up tonight, and the Angel Gabriel summoned us all for the final judgment, who'd get your vote for having done the finest, friendliest job in the last five years?

My vote would go to a smiling, simple man neither young, handsome nor sensational whose friendly faith has restored hope and courage to a dismayed generation. Meaning—Lord love him!—Major Bowes!—*Elsie Robinson, in one of her syndicated columns, in the Hearst newspapers.*

Slap Happy?

Mr. Gene Tunney said communism was on the wane in Europe. The people in Germany are happy, he said, but the economic situation is bad and they do not get enough to eat.—*News item in The New York Times.*

Our Morbid Effects Department

The emphasis in the teaching and study of sociology should be on social relationships and not on social problems. Too much emphasis has been given in the past to the discussion of social problems. Social anatomy, physiology and hygiene should be stressed instead of such social problems as poverty, crime, divorce and other social disorders. Emphasis on such subjects is apt to have a morbid effect upon the minds of young people, and teaches them to be agitators, radicals and reformers.—*A Course of Study for the Secondary Schools of Montana, issued by the State Department of Public Instruction.*

The Herald Tribune's Anti-Noise Campaign

Air Raid Kills 52, Injures 150 in Madrid Marketing Throng: Many Women, Children Slain—Shopping Women Hit, Five Bombs Spread Havoc Amid Workers Gathered for Called-off Meeting—Ministry Is Struck and Subway Halted—Hospital Patients Thrown from Beds; Otherwise, Day Is Quiet. . . .—*Headline in The New York Herald Tribune.*

Add Definitions of Fascism: 3

Italy was torn by insurrection and civil strife until Benito Mussolini and his Blackshirts established order. Fascism is a movement to the left, not to the right. Where socialism stops, fascism continues. Fascism is advanced Marxism.—*Professor Joseph Louis Russo, Italian Department, University of Wisconsin, quoted in The Daily Cardinal.*

Redder Than the Rose

Fascism is not enough, even though it is a start in the right direction.—*President J. Edgar Park, of Wheaton College, in an Armistice Day address, Swarthmore College.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—The Editors.

CORRESPONDENCE

Revolutionary Descendants

SIR: Our letter published in The New Republic last summer suggesting the formation of a liberal organization of Descendants of Revolutionary Ancestors has brought enthusiastic replies from men and women in fifteen states.

Now that the elections are out of the way, we are planning to hold a meeting soon, and will inform our correspondents of the time and place in the hope that those who live in or near New York City may attend.

A suggestion has been made that we call ourselves Descendants of Revolutionary Ancestors.

The excerpts from letters printed below show some of the points of view brought out in response to our inquiry in your columns. We shall be glad to hear from other persons, in any part of the country, who may be interested.

Jeanette H. Melton.
126 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

A woman in New Haven writes: ". . . It seems to me that being descended from Revolutionary ancestors imposes the responsibility to fight for social and economic justice and liberty, not as romantic abstractions, but as human rights inherent in every human being, whether their ancestors came over in the much overpopulated "Mayflower' or in an African slave ship. . . ."

A former D.A.R. official in Fort Wayne, Indiana, says: ". . . As an ex-regent of a D.A.R chapter, I would be glad to join with others who have resigned in recent years and those others who have never joined, though eligible, because of lack of sympathy with the conduct of the organization. Thus we may prove that there are descendants of Revolutionary ancestors who share more nearly the spirit of those freedom-loving pioneers."

A word of caution comes from a resident of New York City: ". . . I assume, of course, that you do not contemplate just another mutual admiration society. My ancestry goes back via Vermont and New Hampshire to Massachusetts of the seventeenth and eighteenth century colonial and Revolutionary War periods. This eligibility has not been made use of by myself and others of my family for the reasons you state in your letter. I shall be interested in the development of your plans."

Williamstown, Massachusetts, yields this show of interest: ". . . My qualifications? The usual ancestors and liberal political views. Despite The New Masses, I shall not apologize for the adjective 'liberal.' I should indeed like to hear from you very much."

An interesting clue to persons of like mind comes from Waterbury, Connecticut: ". . . My suggestion is that you look up—I'm sorry that I don't know just where—the resignations from the D.A.R. since the Brosseau administration. I have read somewhere that the secessions have gone into many thousands and have included some complete chapters. As a matter of record: My mother, now ninety years of age and formerly an enthusiastic member of the D.A.R., resigned in dismay and disgust some years ago. Her four sons, of whom I am one, are of like mind with her in this matter."

An enthusiast in Gary, Indiana, offers to bring in three members. " By all means let us have a D.R.A. I agree with the writer that there must be a great many men and women who can trace their ancestry back to Revolutionary days who do not approve of the present position of the D.A.R. If men are eligible I have at least three prospective members in Gary."

A transplanted Quaker, now in Annisquam, Massachusetts, says: ". . . Surely, I cannot under the circumstances do more than mention my direct ancestor, Francis Daniel Pastorius, early Quaker, 1680 or thereabouts, founder of Germantown, Pennsylvania. I believe he wrote the first protest against slavery in the country. . . . Won't you please tell me more of your idea?"

Multiple recruits are promised from Jacksonville, Florida. ". . . There are several people of my acquaintance in Jacksonville who would be both eligible for and interested in such an organization. Please send us more information. I trust you will not set your

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dues quite as high as the D.A.R. and the S.A.R. I also wonder if you have considered making the name Descendants of Revolutionary Americans instead of Ancestors. . . ."

From Washington, D. C., comes this support: ". . . If you want such a thing as a family tree to prove the authenticity of my statements, it can doubtless be furnished. I am personally rather hazy about the whole business, never having thought much about my ancestors and never having wanted to affiliate with the D.A.R. on account of their general belligerence. It does seem that that organization has rather lost track of the original meaning of the Revolution and the presumable character of the fathers of our country; and a second group based on the idea of liberty, fraternity, equality, *et al.*, would be an excellent thing."

A Misstatement about Mr. Conner

SIR: Mr. James T. Farrell tells your readers that I am half-Irish and half-English "like Pearse" in his review of my novel "Time to Kill" [The New Republic, October 14]. This is not true. Both my father and mother are (or rather were) Connemara people, and their families lived in that area for centuries.

Mr. Farrell evidently got this half-and-half idea from my first novel, where the character was half-Irish and half-English. But that character was not a picture of myself in any way.

Richmond, Surrey, England. REARDEN CONNER.

A Civil-Liberty Case in Poland

SIR: I have just learned that my Polish translator, Mrs. Antonina Sokolicz-Merkel, has been placed under arrest and is in jail in Warsaw. Mrs. Merkel is a novelist and dramatist in her own right, and the founder of the first labor college in Poland, and also, I am told, of the first labor theatre. Some years ago she traveled in this country, and I had the opportunity to know her as a cultivated and devoted woman. I owe to her the fact that some eight or ten of my books have been translated and published in the Polish language. This may be a crime from the point of view of those in authority in that nation, but naturally I regard it as a reason for gratitude and for efforts on the lady's behalf. She is over sixty years of age, and I am told that she is now seriously ill. When she was in Canada a Polish consul removed the portions of her passport that entitled her to enter other countries and she was thereby forced to return to Poland, and was promptly jailed for the offense of expressing opinions contrary to the welfare of the country. This, of course, is a charge familiar to all victims of dictators, and it calls for protest from all who cherish the freedom of writers to have their own ideas concerning the welfare of their country and of all countries.

The recent Congress of Western Writers in San Francisco adopted a resolution on behalf of Mrs. Merkel, and forwarded copies to the Polish ambassador in Washington and to the head of the government in Warsaw. I wish to urge that believers in free institutions should make their individual protests, and that organizations should take up the cause and give it all possible publicity.

In these days most of the dictators are seeking loans and they are sensitive as to the opinions of the outside world for this reason. If a sufficient number of protests are received from all over the United States and other countries, the Polish government may decide that it is doing itself more harm by imprisoning Mrs. Merkel than she could do if she were at liberty to protest against the poverty and oppression of the workers and peasants of her native land.

Pasadena, Calif. UPTON SINCLAIR.

Aid for the Striking Seamen

SIR: As a survivor of the S.S. "Mohawk" disaster, I came to learn about the conditions suffered by the men who man our ships, and am writing you in their behalf. I know how just their demands are in the present strike and am convinced that victory for them will mean greater safety for crew and passengers alike.

At this writing, 36,000 seamen on the East Coast and Gulf ports are on strike. This number represents nearly all of the seamen who reached port since November 1. The rest are still on the high seas. Judging from the response thus far—nearly 100 percent of the men approached came off the boats—the Strike Strategy Committee feels this strike will be supported by all seamen as they arrive in port.

We most urgently ask the readers of The New Republic to help them win. To do this, they must have food, clothing, funds, shelter. Victory for them will not only improve their conditions—it will mean a great advance for all working people in every sphere of endeavor.

A committee of public-spirited individuals, friends of the seamen's cause, have organized the Citizens' Committee to Aid the Striking Seamen, with offices at 232 West Twenty-second Street, New York. They urge all friends of labor to communicate with them at their address, or by phoning Watkins 9-7447. Please telephone or send your contribution of funds, food or clothing—immediately.

New York City. SARAH JACKSON SMITH.

"Mother of Exiles"

SIR: We wish to congratulate James Benét for his excellent article, "Mother of Exiles," in The New Republic of November 25.

May we, the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, be allowed to add a few facts to Mr. Benét's comments on the President's speech at the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of the Statue of Liberty. This committee is defending not only Alfred Miller, Joseph Ganghofer and Hans Dittman, whom Mr. Benét mentions, but also five other anti-Nazis all facing deportation to Hitler Germany. Also, at about the time President Roosevelt was delivering his speech, Otto Richter, twenty-one-year-old German refugee, was leaving the United States with his American-born wife, having been denied asylum by the United States government. The Mexican government accepted Richter as a political refugee.

ABNER GREEN,
American Committee for Protection
New York City. of Foreign Born.

Back to the Great Engineer

SIR: In the September issue of The Atlantic Monthly there appears an article entitled "Selling More Labor," written by Sumner H. Slichter, professor of Business Economics at the Harvard School of Business Administration. Professor Slichter, whose book, "Modern Economic Society," is widely favored as a text in colleges and universities, suggests a manner of coping with the problem of unemployment. Conveniently the article closes with a four-point summary:

> 1. To avoid for the time being general increases in the price of labor.
> 2. To reduce the fear of drastic deflation on the part of business managers by making moderate cuts in government expenditures. . . .
> 3. To abandon the policy of attempting to make business spend by the use of fear and compulsion and adopt as an objective of public policy the fostering of confidence. . . .
> 4. . . . To seek the coöperation of industry in avoiding increases in the normal working week above forty hours until unemployment has been substantially reduced.

. . . The first point of the Slichter plan, that of avoiding increases in the price of labor, was enthusiastically adopted by all employers in the period from 1930 to 1933. Late in that period, however, the business men whose welfare is so close to the heart of Professor Slichter began to waver in their maintenance of this policy, and uneasily discussed the need for a restoration of purchasing power. During the same period the administration, which had previously firmly upheld Point Two, that of making moderate cuts in governmental expenditures, also began to waver and finally betrayed the Slichter plan by increasing expenditures to the extent of incurring deficits of over $6,000,000,000. However, the Hoover administration never faltered in its maintenance of Point Three; it assiduously undertook every known method of fostering confidence in an effort to make business spend. And yet despite this and the fact that it also upheld Point Four by seeking the coöperation of industry in avoiding increases in working hours, the Hoover administration was unable to reduce unemployment.

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The futility of the Slichter plan is so great on its face that it seems unnecessarily cruel to draw the parallel between it and the policy of the Hoover administration. And yet, in a sense, for the action of Professor Slichter in promulgating policies which for their method would entail sacrifice of already low salary and wage incomes and which for their objective would have the utter prostration of the American people before the lords of industry, no treatment could be too harsh. For him to present a plan of American fascism in the guise of a recovery scheme formulated by a well known economist, and supposedly backed by the prestige of Harvard University, is inexcusable.

New York City. JAMES W. MCNALLY.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Arthur Evans Wood, professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan, compliments us on our recent supplement on the case of Jerome Davis, and sends us a copy of his letter to President Angell of Yale in which he expresses his regret "that Yale should yield, apparently, to the forces of Mammon, and remove a good man from a strategic place in the life of the nation." . . . Elizabeth Winston Malcombre, executive secretary of The Southern Committee for People's Rights, sends us a copy of the Committee's letter to President Angell protesting Yale's action.

A letter to Anthony Eden comes from Jessie Lloyd O'Connor agreeing with our editorial comment of last week as to the obvious falsity of his declaration to the House of Commons that other nations were more guilty of unneutrality in Spain than Germany and Italy.

A full discussion of the present maritime strike on the Pacific Coast is contained in a pamphlet, "The Maritime Crisis," which we have received from the International Longshoremen's Association, 27 Clay Street, San Francisco. Copies may be obtained from that office for five cents each.

Fred R. Graham, of Missouri University, writes that he had become disgusted with The New Republic because of its lack of material on the consumers' coöperative movement, but that he greatly approves Herbert Fierst's "Coöperatives and Labor" in our issue of November 18, and hopes we will publish more articles like it.

Educational broadcasting will be the subject of a national conference in Washington, D. C., on December 10, 11 and 12, we are informed by C. S. Marsh, the executive secretary of the conference.

The J. B. Lippincott Company, the Philadelphia publishing firm, on the occasion of reëstablishing an editorial office in New York City, appeals to our readers for the address of their editorial office in New York in the 1860's. They lost the records by fire in 1899 and now they can't remember.

The League of Women Shoppers, Inc., of 258 Fifth Avenue, New York City, sends us a report on the strike of the hosiery workers at the Berkshire Knitting Mills, Reading, Pennsylvania, of crucial importance to workers in the industry as a whole, and points out that consumer action in support of the strikers is difficult because of the variety of brand names involved, of which the League can furnish lists.

What's on the Air?

Faculty members of the University of Chicago engage in a round-table discussion of current affairs. Every Sunday, 12:30 to 1:30 P.M., N.B.C.-Red Network.

Edward Tomlinson, commentator, in broadcasts from Buenos Aires describes events at the Pan American Peace Conference. Monday, December 7, 11:15 to 11:30 P.M., N.B.C.-Blue Network; Tuesday, December 8, 6:20 to 6:30 P.M., N.B.C.-Blue Network; Thursday, December 10, 6:20 to 6:30 P.M., N.B.C.-Red Network.

"The Labor Situation" is the topic for platform discussion and audience questions at America's Town Meeting of the Air program. Thursday, December 10, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., N.B.C.-Blue Network.

Mayor LaGuardia, Amelia Earhart, Frank Hawks and others on Junior Birdmen of America program. Saturday, December 12, 9 to 10 A.M., N.B.C.-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard.

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Mr. Collins and Johnny

Johnny Johnson, by Paul Green. Forty-fourth Street Theatre, November 19, 1936.

THERE are times when we are led to think that only serious intentions can be light without boredom; or shall we say at least flexible? You make a mistake about this "Johnny Johnson" of the Group Theatre's if you say that songs and dances are added to a play that might otherwise lack ginger or padding. You begin at the wrong end. The piece is built of dialogue, movement, scene, music, all together. It is a promising—and needed—example of theatre that passes from one to the other of these with equal ease. The fact that not every one of the performers can sing well makes the point only that much clearer. In musical comedy this goes as a matter of course: you speak, you sing, you float off into rhythmic movement, as the case may be. Criticism of serious theatre tends to shrink the complex medium to drama merely, conveyable in print.

"Johnny Johnson" is not the first piece of the season to be entertaining; but it is the first to be stimulating. Stimulating as theatre, strictly speaking. I could not tell from merely listening to the words how much the dramatist had contributed, how much, that is, he had intended things to go as they did, or at least had made the inventions by which the entertainment sustained itself, as a rule most happily. Certainly he provided the story, the characters and the main drift of mood. And yet even with these it is possible that their flavor is half due to the presentation. One of the traits of the theatre is that you never know in these matters just how much belongs to one of its mediums, how much to another. In themselves the words of Mr. Green's play were pretty often dull. Without the spirit of glancing wit, the pure rashness of theatre extravagance, they might fall out to be flat and banal. On the whole, listening to the words and watching the development of the story and the layout of the scenes, I am inclined to think it is chiefly Mr. Russell Collins as the hero, Mr. Donald Oenslager as the designer of the settings, and the Group Theatre as producer, that should get the honors.

One never knows just how seriously to take the stage. It would be a mistake to expect any great amount of brains as such from it. What thinking the theatre does is apt to be inferior enough; and if not inferior, is apt to come to us, as it should, well buried in theatre substance. Proper, social-minded, earnest judgment of "Johnny Johnson" would no doubt speak of it as a play against war, a play for peace. As a play against war it strikes me—I am sorry to say most dramas do that are to be taken as carrying some moral or intellectual theme—as a very gentle bit of cerebration indeed. In fact, to make a confession, one of the chief problems for a critic who reviews any majority of the plays produced lies in the fact that he is expected to take seriously the ideas in them. Perhaps some insistent democracy requires such unanimous respect.

On the anti-war basis "Johnny Johnson" has ironies, horrors, booming guns, boys dying far from home, officers callous, ambitious and flyblown, not to speak of climatic and dug-out effects. The story serves to bite these themes in. It opens with a celebration of a peace monument, with the mayor presiding, the monument's sculptor standing shyly by. Word comes that President Wilson has declared a state of war between the United States and Germany. Except Johnny, all run off to register loyalty. But the girl he loves wants him to enlist. He will not give up his convictions. Only when the war is declared to be a war against war does he yield and then with his whole soul, all his enthusiasm, gawkiness and folk reality. Off at the front he volunteers, and draws the lot, to go out and take a sniper. He ends by sending the boy back to the German lines with a message that the Americans do not hate them and are as anxious as they are to end the fighting. He is wounded, taken to the hospital and finally escapes with a tank of laughing gas. With the gas he sets the supreme council in a state where they call off the war. They recover, the attack comes off after all, and Johnny is sent home to an asylum. Thus shut up, he loses his fiancée, who has nothing better now than to marry his old rival. We see Johnny in the debating society, then against his will freed, then selling toys; for a moment we see the woman he loves and her child, then the final motif: Johnny goes away, somewhat after the Chaplin motif, down the vanishing road.

The sarcasm of this story is sometimes excellent, the pictures often vivid. Some of the scenes are too long—that, for instance, where the cannon—a motif really imaginative—sing above the men sleeping there in the trench, or the scene of the debating society, however pertinent nationally.

So far as I am concerned, and can take seriously or value this drama, I should say it is in favor of human character, human candor, honesty and heart. If I were an intellectual, I should want—perhaps I should demand of it to be and of myself to think so—that the play be anti-war. But simple instinct tells me that any goose can write a play against or for anything; this anti and pro business is the writer's easiest outlet and the dullard's easiest response. The best side to Mr. Green's play lies in his creation of human beings fresh and sweet, odd, right and sufficiently strong. Johnny Johnson is a vindication of the human whim and sincerity, simple passion, clear oddities of a single pure heart and a single brain. This quality in the play resides most in Johnny. How far that Johnny we see on the stage belongs to the author, how far to Mr. Collins, is another matter. Certainly it would be possible enough to say that the character as written in words might be, or by an actor turned, banal and squashy. Mr. Russell Collins creates a veritable myth of it, almost a fable of sweet human oddity and truth. He gives to the role the investiture, plain music and pathos of legend. His acting is pure, final, elusively professional. For example, the scene with the sniper; it might have been sheer platitude. Mr. Collins creates a thing sound, male and Franciscan, fresh, expert and beautiful. For some time he has been one of our best actors. The one thing he still needs is a little more assertion (or presentation). No generous or modest impulse should hinder this; the thing to be asserted is not himself but what as an artist he creates.

For "Johnny Johnson" Mr. Donald Oenslager has done the wittiest décor of the season, to which in his turn Mr. Morris Carnovsky, as the psychiatrist, has contributed a very witty and dramatically right performance. To the production the Group Theatre brings a method that is uneven—naturally enough in anything so experimental—but that has real and very significant theatricality. STARK YOUNG.

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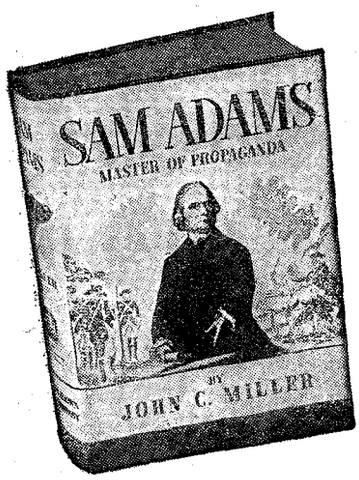

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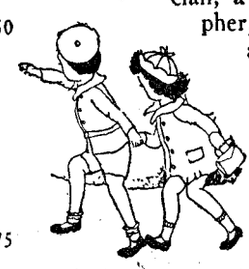

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Winter Book Section

Chesterton the Protestant

HOMOGENEITY resembles nothing so much as chaos. This is why Chesterton's "Autobiography,"[1] while markedly symmetrical and unified, nevertheless achieves a certain effect of confusion by too rich a sense of connection. Everything that happened to him, everything that he thought and felt, was to Chesterton so obviously related to everything else, and to the ultimate significance of his life, that from the very first page he is busy tracing lines of association criss-crossing in time from each other and from past to present; and the result is a sort of four-dimensional time-space pudding in which the sense of direction and structure is obliterated.

There are, to be sure, rich plums of characterization, like his father's grave habit of inventing names for flowers ("Merely a sprig of wild bigamy," he would say lightly, and add that there was "a local variety known as Bishop's Bigamy"), and anecdotal pleasures such as that of the clerk in his father's office who at intervals would address a fellow clerk "in hollow and resounding tones" with the words, "Boundless Space!" and then remark hopelessly to the other clerks, "He can't grasp it!" There are reminiscences of Yeats, Belloc, Wells, Shaw and numerous others. Wit or high spirits flash through many passages. But somehow all these are lost in an enormous redundancy of comment, an obesity of editorializing and digression, and swathed in obliterating layers of paradox—that paradox which was Chesterton's gift and became his vice.

The events of his life, that we should like to hear about, are smothered in recapitulations of the opinions he had already voiced, and voiced more brilliantly, in "Heretics," "Orthodoxy," "The Man Who Was Thursday" and "The Napoleon of Notting Hill." Sometimes in the "Autobiography" the loud cymbals of his convictions sound almost perfunctory, a tired conscientious echo of his vigorous self. And the paradoxes, once the flashing of a distinctive insight, often as penetrating as it was startling, have become with the years an obsession, built on a mechanical formula: "The Clapham patriot was ashamed of Clapham"; "The trouble with politicians is that they have no politics"; not the A-ness, but invariably the non-A-ness of A.

Chesterton's significance, in a way, however, lies in the fact that his entire career was one of his own paradoxes. He rebelled with violence and a kind of splendor against the main currents of his time. By carrying skepticism beyond conventional limits he grew skeptical of skepticism. He startled agnostics by pointing out that their recoil from any form of religious experience was positively dogmatic, and materialists by arguing that their determination to find in the universe nothing but matter so far outran reason as to be absolutely superstitious. In an age characterized by a uniformity of unbelief, Chesterton achieved the heresy of denying its dogmas and calling his denial orthodoxy. His true distinction is thus that he was one of the great Protestants of the age.

During the Boer War he managed to protest against both imperialism and pacifism; he was a patriotic Englishman who hated bullying a nation of farmers for the profit of a gang of diamond merchants. "My point was that the Boers were right in fighting; not that anybody must be wrong in fighting." He hated the determinism that traced all men's actions to heredity and environment, because he wished "to fix the terrible truth of Responsibility, not on tramps or drunkards, but on the rulers of the state and the richest men in the empire." And above all he abominated the dirty hands of plutocracy fouling the landscape and poisoning the streams no more than they defiled the minds and hearts of men. This was why he reviled all the modern orthodoxies, subservient to schemers and hoarders, as no more than the painted doxies of wealth.

And this was partly why he assumed the rather quaint and flamboyant medievalism that he flaunted in the face of industrialism. It was perhaps not so much industrialism that he disliked as the stinks and filth of what Mr. Lewis Mumford calls the paleotechnic environment; but the entrepreneur and financier he certainly hated with all his heart. To modern chicanery, therefore, he opposed medieval chivalry. Better a Napoleon of Notting Hill than a Napoleon of finance; better the spirit of Runnymede than that of Rothermere and Beaverbrook. He fought with the forces of comic opera against the dark Satanic mills that were spreading a miasma of despair over the modern world.

The War was the culminating iniquity of the industrialists and internationalist money-changers. The nebulous promise of a war to end war, that beclouded the judgment of the liberals, left Chesterton undazzled; and he knew that England had her own Prussians at home, disguised as patriots. And still, with all her sins, "confused, corrupted, degraded," she was preferable to "an inhuman and heathen hegemony." The War left everything where it had been —new noblemen blossoming out of obscure commercial soils, new business enterprises puffed and publicized, "and all the powers of scientific mergers and newspaper combines, that now rule the State"—all his old foes to be combatted still.

But Chesterton fought with a sense of the magnificent glory of existence and struggle that the very evils against which he couched his lance were unable to destroy. It sharpened his fiery opposition to "the decadents and pessimists who ruled the culture of the age," flowering into the melodramatic fantasy of "The Man Who Was Thursday," a pantomime that was nothing but a nightmare of things as they seemed to the pessimist of the nineties. In the midst of all his other quarrels with modern humanity, the fundamental one was that people had "resigned themselves to being citizens of mean cities," mean in architecture, costume, even manners and, what was worst of all, mean in imaginative conception. Against this, Chesterton called on people to realize "the wonder and splendor of being alive." It was the very core of his crusade. His own aliveness was a rich exuberance sometimes almost grotesque, but at its best his style was a strategy as well as a jest. He dyed himself in motley that others might taste more abundant life.

EDGAR JOHNSON.

[1] The Autobiography of G. K. Chesterton. New York: Sheed and Ward. 386 pages. $3.

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A Brilliant History

Man's Worldly Goods, by Leo Huberman. New York: Harper and Brothers. 349 pages. $2.50.

THOSE who read Leo Huberman's "We, the People" in 1932 will know what to expect of this book. Like its predecessor, to which it forms a companion volume, "Man's Worldly Goods" is one of those intellectual curiosities that readers have the pleasure of encountering every generation or so. Huberman, who has taught youngsters at the age of twelve to fourteen years, has been writing economic history for them: "We, the People" was such a history of the United States, "Man's Worldly Goods" is a similar history of modern Europe from the end of the dark ages in the eleventh century to the present. Huberman is singularly equipped for his task: he is the possessor of an amazingly vivid and colloquial vocabulary and what amounts to a real talent for simplification. Within a narrative of not much more than 125,000 words he has gathered together the main factors in the rise and decline of modern capitalism as the history of Europe has revealed them. Youngsters will read his book, of course, as they have and are continuing to read his first one. I have no hesitation in recommending it to adults who want the best single-volume work on the subject currently available.

I am not saying this in any sudden burst of enthusiasm. As a teacher and student of economic history, I know how neglected this discipline has been in the American colleges and universities. It is not speaking wildly to say that the great proportion of my readers who are college-bred never had a formal course in economic history and indeed, in their general historical studies, never were introduced to the great European names associated with the pioneering work in the field. How many of them have heard of Sombart, Weber, Strieder, Pirenne, Sée, Mathiez, Boissonnade, Hauser, Mantoux, Lipson, Tawney, Clapham, Unwin, Hobson? How many of them have read Marx and Lenin as historians? Perhaps excepting two universities, the serious student has nowhere to go in this country for the systematic prosecution of research in the field of the origins and development of capitalist institutions.

It is a little difficult to account for our backwardness, considering our superior university resources. I am not seeking to present a studied analysis of the problem; but the following random thoughts may have merit. Primarily, the study of economic history in Europe has flourished so richly in the last thirty years or so because of Marx. His amazing thesis, which runs like a gleaming thread through "Capital," of the dialectical origins of capitalism within the womb of the feudal system, has been a challenge and an inspiration to a long generation of scholars. In effect, what has been taking place in the European universities, has been a running debate between Marxists and their scholarly opponents: and the world of learning has benefited immeasurably as students have been compelled to marshal their facts on one side or the other. Even those who finally ended up by becoming anti-Marxists—Sombart is the leading example—began their studies within the shadow of the great work. It is interesting to the Marxist to note how thoroughly permeated with Marx's vocabulary and concepts are the writings even of minor scholars in the European social sciences today.

This debate was never conducted in the American universities: and the reason simply was that socialism had not yet become the active faith of a growing group among the American people. Why should scholars seek to test the doctrine of historical materialism when that idea had not reached those layers in the population where it was likely to cause real havoc? I am saying in so many words that Sombart's concept of a capitalist spirit, springing out of the necessities and desires of the individual enterpriser, was an effort to break down the Marxian claim of the origins of capitalism in the contradictions and class conflicts of the feudalism preceding it: and that, consciously or not, Sombart was defending capitalism because the socialist movement was imperiling it.

Other reasons for American retardation might be indicated. The extraordinary influence of F. J. Turner turned American historical scholarship into a blind alley for almost thirty years: younger men are beginning to grope their way out only now. Also, too many of our great universities are located in rural rather than metropolitan centers, so that scholars in history are truly blind to the forces that are shaping the events of the modern world. I should like to record also the loss of Charles A. Beard to academic scholarship as one of the major catastrophes in modern American learning. When Beard published his "Economic Interpretation of the Constitution" more than twenty years ago, his roots were firmly fixed in English and American social theory: and his first work was a brilliant monograph for whose writing an understanding of the principles enunciated by Harrington, Locke and Madison was quite, although not completely, adequate. Beard quit the academic scene five years later. Had he continued as a professional scholar, working with advanced students in his seminars, particularly in the intellectual environment of New York City, Beard undoubtedly would have tested his assumptions in a constantly active laboratory. Knowing him as I do, I am sure he would have come to admit that his rather simple economic determinism—the idea that in specific situations only, men were consciously guided by a personal economic interest—did not furnish a wholly satisfactory answer to the problem of the origins of capitalist institutions in America. The gain to scholarship would have been immense in the scores of disciples who would have left his seminars to continue their independent studies in ever widening circles.

Now all this is not remote from Huberman. For Huberman, when he wrote "We, the People," was under the influence of the same Beard who had written the "Economic Interpretation" in 1913 and the "Rise of American Civilization" in 1927. He was interested in the part performed by, as it were, random economic forces; but he had not yet learned to weigh the significance of the state, the cleansing effects of revolution and the basic role played by class struggles in every mode of production. In other words, Huberman was not yet a historical materialist. But in writing "Man's Worldly Goods," Huberman has deserted Beard for Marx; as, indeed, Beard himself might have done. In this sense, apart from its intrinsic merits, Huberman's work is significant. He is applying the Marxian philosophy and method not rigidly but fluidly: thus, his vocabularly is a completely familiar one. And at the same time he has added to and corrected Marx's historical analysis on the basis of the best that is to be found in modern European scholarship. Huberman's bibliography is an authentic one; it is recommended to those who would like to continue studying the history of capitalism.

Because the book is so good, I wish it were better. There are some minor inaccuracies in it and Huberman's emphasis is not always sound. So, he is wrong in imputing a strictly barter economy to the dark ages; he is mistaken about the existence of important gold deposits in Mexico in the sixteenth century; his interpretation of the Protestant Reformation is too crudely materialist; he has no proper understanding of the part played by bullion in the early

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traffic with the Orient. In the realm of economic theory and public policy, he is excellent on mercantilism and laissez-faire but he has next to nothing to say of the canonical doctrine against usury. Similarly, the treatment of the French Revolution as a class struggle is thorough, but the Puritan Revolution is disregarded except for incidental mention. Also, his discussion of the rise and technics of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century is surprisingly slight. I do not want to cavil too much, however, for all this is minor. There can be no question that Huberman has written a brilliant book; parents should get it for their children, but they should read it themselves first.

LOUIS M. HACKER.

Without Benefit of Laughter

Caleb Catlum's America, by Vincent McHugh. Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Sons. $2.50.

IT WOULD be a magnificent achievement if a writer were to create unassisted a new American folk hero. He would be remembered with Jonathan Swift and François Rabelais and Miguel Cervantes and Charlie Chaplin. As far as I know, Vincent McHugh is the first American novelist to make such an ambitious attempt single-handed. James Stevens and Roark Bradford and the Leighton brothers were modest enough to go to the people for their heroes. Mr. McHugh went to his library and his solitary imagination.

Although he presents himself as a mere amanuensis in the heavily humorous introduction, naming as the real author one Caleb Catlum of Catlumville, his meaning is clear. Mr. McHugh would have us believe that he has produced a hero fit to associate with such American demigods as Paul Bunyan the logger and Mike Fink the keelboatman and John Henry the steeldriver. Caleb says he chummed round with these and other great Americans for more than a hundred years. This would be easier to believe if Caleb's stories showed any comprehension whatsoever of how giants are born and how they grow. Mr. McHugh, to be sure, attempts to distill the essence of such lore at the outset:

> I saw then that Caleb's narrative was not literary at all but . . . the most characteristically home-grown kind of narrative, the form of story telling most generally understood and practised by Americans—the bull-thrower's yarn. It had the hard-bitten fancy, the giantism and Lilliputianism, the good liar's contempt for his hearer's disbelief, the long words used as mystifiers, the sheer delight in and braggadocio about physical prowess, the democratic sciolism, the running change of scene and subject, the naïvely gross humor, the melodramatic attack, the forced coincidences, the scrambling of time and space, and that curiously hard and flat-surfaced awkwardness concealing sentiment or emotion: all those which have been the constant ingredients of the prime American whopper.

But this definition omits the most important ingredient of all—that which Noah Webster in similar vein terms "the felicitous perception or expression of associations between ideas or words not usually connected such as to produce an amusing surprise." Wit. The wit which enlivens American folklore is nowhere to be found in "Caleb Catlum's America." And Mr. McHugh in overlooking wit, or in trying to create an American hero without it, reveals himself as a sciolist indeed.

The easiest and worst mistake that can be made about traditional American humor is to suppose that it consists of nothing more than overstatement. This mistake is continued throughout "Caleb Catlum's America." It takes more than an outrageous liar to make an American hero and it takes more than silly exaggeration to make a tall tale. Even if Caleb Catlum was born in 1798, he has yet to learn this.

If such a story is to be worth telling it must have statistics more vivid than that of a pack-mule train so long it took five days to pass a given point (compare Windy Van Hooten's circus parade that was always two towns ahead before the calliope could be got off the lot). It needs similes less tepid than Caleb's knocking Mike Fink "colder than a wronged woman" (compare "colder than a well-digger's ass"). The bluster must be tougher (compare Caleb's keelboatmen's talk with the passage from Mark Twain it seeks to imitate). It should have color and restraint and that savage ironic thrust at the end which ignorant book reviewers sometimes smugly identify as "the O. Henry twist." And above all it must give no hint that the narrator is trying to be funny (compare Mr. McHugh's clownish Catlum with James Stevens' dignified Bunyan).

Of course the large underlying error of Mr. McHugh's book is that it turns out to be precisely what he says it is not—*literary*. It smells of ink. The insuperable difference between Caleb Catlum and the heroes of American mythology is that Caleb is a fictitious character put together with all-too-evident haste by an individual, whereas Paul Bunyan and Mike Fink and John Henry and others unrecorded have grown through the years and their great deeds have been told patiently and with reverent laughter by generations of working men united in communal creation.

GEORGE MILBURN.

Word Game

365 Days. Edited by Kay Boyle, Laurence Vail, Nina Conarain. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 429 pages. $3.

SEVERAL years ago, in a villa above Villefranche, I played a game with Kay Boyle, Laurence Vail, Nina Conarain and a few others. One wrote a line—a disconnected phrase snatched from a sequence of thought—at the top of a paper, folded it under and passed it on to the next person, who wrote another line, and so forth. The lines had to apply to no specific subject, to have no common denominator; and when the paper was unfolded, after it had passed around the group a few times, the result was a page of surrealist prose, quite amusing, which might have been copied off and submitted to Transition, with a good chance of acceptance.

"365 Days" reminds me a little of that game—not because its tone is predominantly dada, but because the contributors have been asked to subscribe to arbitrary, gamelike limitations, and because the result seems to me not so much a "record in fiction from one year of modern times" as a hodgepodge of incomplete and uncommunicative fragments. Our lines were like that—I am sure that everyone felt that his words, torn though they were from their context, had significance and beauty; but nothing but nonsense was conveyed to the reader of the whole.

The writers—"more than 100 of America, England and the Continent"—who contributed to this volume have tried to portray a variety of states of mind, each one limited in its exposition to a 300-word page. Each short-short-short story is indexed by a date and a headline supposed to sum up its content and attest to its timeliness. But these head-

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lines are not the ones that caught the average eye in that year (1934); they are manufactured headlines and no more tangent to the times, generally, than the news-breaks in The New Yorker. They are the tags to telegraphic stories now whimsical, now realistic, but never complete and never satisfying.

In a foreword Kay Boyle says, "If there is a thing I want to go back to America for it is to see the lizards red as leather, there's nothing like them over here." I think that's the trouble with the book; 1934 had more important things running around in it than lizards red as leather.

CARLTON BROWN.

Absentee Generalship

The War in Outline, by Liddell Hart. New York: Random House. 305 pages and maps. $2.

THERE is much more to Captain Liddell Hart's little book on the Great War than is indicated by its title. It is not merely a highly condensed history of the war, but also a devastating criticism of the professional military mind as it displayed itself on the Allied side. Not one of the great names is spared.

General French, commander of the first British expeditionary force, thought the Germans were reaching the point of exhaustion—in October, 1914. General Kitchener, at the head of Britain's War Office, did foresee a long war, but he stubbornly resisted the introduction of every tool or weapon that might conceivably have shortened it. The Stokes gun, the extensive use of the machine gun, the Lewis gun (a light machine gun) and the tank were introduced and made standard armament, over the original objections of the War Office, by the energetic intervention of (principally) Lloyd George, who had become Minister of Munitions.

In the so-called war of attrition that was carried on for three years, Joffre, Foch and Haig are shown to have been destroyers of armies—of their own armies, not the enemy's. Against the new fortifications and machine guns the old offensive methods were hopeless, but the generals retained their blind belief in the virtue of the offensive. The Italian Cadorna was their worthy rival and imitator. After eleven battles of the Isonzo, the Italians were still on the Isonzo. Then Caporetto overtook them.

The command of the British navy is shown to have been equally dull and unimaginative. In 1917 German submarines were destroying the British merchant marine at the rate of a million tons each month. Lord Jellicoe, the naval commander-in-chief, was in despair. Again it was Lloyd George, now Prime Minister, who forced the admiralty to adopt the convoy system. In conjunction with other methods, this obvious defensive measure reduced the monthly losses to one-fifth of the former figure.

The generals' tactics were as bad as their strategy and their inability to apply the instruments offered them by modern industry. G.H.Q. was completely out of touch with the fighting front and men were again and again ordered to attack the enemy through impassable mud. Front-line trenches were heavily manned, so that enemy bombardments pulverized masses of men by whole regiments and divisions. It was from the Germans that the Allied commanders finally learned to man their front lines lightly, scout fashion, so that the shock of bombardment and of the initial attack would fall on small numbers.

Captain Hart ascribes the incompetence of the military leaders to several factors operating in combination: the rule of seniority, which excluded all younger men, however able, from taking part in the determination of important measures; the remoteness of G.H.Q. from the front; the startlingly novel features of the War, in which the old hands were just as much novices as the civilians; the difficulty of handling unprecedentedly great masses of men, conjoined with a fanatical belief in the supreme need of mass; the requirement in modern war of political and social insight, in addition to the mastery of military technique.

We may assume that the experiences of the War, as embodied in the criticisms of Captain Hart, have been taken to heart by the various governments, and that in the next war all the latest improvements in the art of mass murder will be employed by the various armies. Does it follow that quality will take the place of quantity, that small highly trained armies will take the place of the armed nations of the last war? On the contrary, modern industry furnishes the means of equipping and transporting armies on a greater scale than ever before, and every government is forced to follow the example of the others. Captain Hart's ideal of a small professional army is doomed to remain a utopia.

This utopian military conception appears to have its origin in a reactionary political utopia (and weight is lent to this interpretation by the report that Captain Hart is affiliated with the Mosley group of fascists). At any rate, it is the wisest policy for reactionary politicians to shrink from putting arms into the hands of workers and peasants, who might turn them against their oppressors, particularly in case of defeat.

HERMAN SIMPSON.

Battle in a Mist

The War Goes On, by Sholem Asch. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.

THE PUBLISHER of "The War Goes On" calls it an epic novel; and that is probably what is wrong with it. The subject of the Jew in Germany at this time is too near and too overwhelming to be put into an epic novel. It is the material for newspaper stories, for magazine articles, and no doubt for narratives of individual human suffering—but what man today could have the vision to see it from above and complete, as the stuff of an epic novel? In trying to make such a book Sholem Asch has spread himself thinly over too large a canvas. He has produced a diorama rather than a panorama.

The book begins with a stirring scene in Ukrainia. Pillaging armies, a pogrom, hidden money, the pregnant mistress of a bandit leader. From out of this welter comes Aron Judkewitch, a young Jewish adventurer, holding on to the fortune which he made by playing with both sides of the Russian Revolution. Aron goes to Germany, speculates in marks, steals a poor devil's wife; all this is living and vivid if a little sensational. And then he gets mixed up with the Bodenheimers, a family of Jewish bankers. (Why always Jewish bankers? Were there no Jewish workmen in Germany?) Then all of them, Aron and the tribe of the Bodenheimers, are blanketed by the confused actions and emotions of the Nazi fog.

From the moment that the Jewish bankers come into the book, life departs from it. The German Jews are the stock figures of Jewish fiction, the dignified, rather dull banker, the intellectual, hesitating newspaper man, the eternal matriarch, the young, meek, modest wives, the son who is half-gentile and half-Jewish, the thick-headed proud Junker, the young Nazi. All of these act exactly as they act in the other novels that have been written on the subject. Here

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and there is a flash of life. The picture of Hitler making a speech is superb. When little Judkewitch loses his money and stands shabbily waiting for a train to go to France, the book becomes warm and vivid again—then the son of the bankers swamps him once more, sweeps him away and winds up the last chapters in a sea of confused and muddled thinking. Sholem Asch was born in Russian Poland and understands Poles and Russians from the inside. But of Germans, and even German Jews, he seems to accept the picture made by other writers.

It may be considered treason for a person of my sympathies to speak unkindly of this book. But it is a dangerous thing to praise work which is dull merely because it is on our side. You can drive more converts away by boring them than you can by fighting them.

HELEN WOODWARD.

City of Dead Souls

Bitter Victory, by Louis Guilloux. Translated by Samuel Putnam. New York: Robert McBride and Company. $2.50.

"BITTER VICTORY," the publication of which placed its author in the forefront of modern French fiction, is not a first novel. Before this one, Louis Guilloux had written four others, and they are by no means devoid of great literary qualities. With uncommon keenness of observation and deep sympathy he depicted in them the life of the humble, especially that artisan class from which he is descended. The characters belong in the so-called "populist" school of fiction. With "Bitter Victory," however, we witness a decisive break with this school. Here the gentleness, humility and spirit of resignation that seem to characterize Guilloux's previous work give place to violence, bitterness, sharp lucidity; instead of description from outside, we have the corrosive power of the inner dialogue; the characters, without having lost their local concreteness, are now universal symbols; and the somewhat timid realism of the former novels has become articulated into tragedy.

This miraculous growth of the artist is connected with his progress in social awareness. For a great revolutionary idea dominates this splendid novel—not as a thesis preceding the emotion, but as an invisible bond that unites and gives meaning to all the subsidiary episodes—the realization that our world, which is bent upon death and destruction, could already have been different if only man had consented to transform his knowledge into action and to take his destiny into his own hands.

The scene of action is laid in a little town in Brittany, far removed from the battlefields. It is the fourth year of the World War. The civilian population is beginning to doubt the sacredness of the great massacre, and news of mutinies arrives from the front. The spirit of patriotism is kept alive by profiteers and soft-job men. Thanks to their social position they have managed to escape active service, and they satisfy their conscience by distributing candy in the hospitals, by patronizing the invalids, by organizing intimate ceremonies where the genteel people meet; they drink champagne and listen to grandiloquent speeches. And all that time, the little pot-bellied mayor of the town continues his daily rounds, delivering to the families curt official notices that their sons are dead.

In this grim and grotesque atmosphere Cripure spends his last day. Cripure—the central character—is professor of Philosophy in the local *lycée*. Proud, solitary, stricken by an infirmity that gives him a ridiculous appearance, he is, in the opinion of his fellow citizens, "a little cracked, as happens to great intellects." After an unhappy marriage, he has given up all social ambition. He lives with a servant girl. To justify his contempt for mankind he plans a great book: "The Chrestomathy of Despair." Cripure sees clearly all the disgusting side of life, but he never passes to action, he keeps his feelings within himself. This does not prevent the others from realizing that he is a "rebel." He is both respected and persecuted. Isolated, "misunderstood," embittered by his failure, he finally commits suicide.

A series of episodes gradually leads up to this climax. The episodes are centered around the decoration in the *lycée* of Deputy Faurel's wife, a nurse who allegedly has distinguished herself by "bravery" in taking care of the wounded. The organizing spirit of this ceremony—the whole town is aware that it is a farce—is the successful hypocrite Nabucet, Cripure's adversary. Cripure nevertheless is compelled to participate and to simulate patriotism. There are many subsidiary episodes, each of them revealing a situation of the utmost poignancy. There is, for instance, a former pupil of Cripure who comes to see him before leaving for the front, in the hope of getting some ideas on "why he lives." Cripure evades the question. There is the headmaster who is notified that his only son is to be shot by a firing squad, as a mutineer. There is young Lucien Bourcier, a demobilized officer who quarrels with his family because he refuses to go to the ceremony of decoration. There is Babinot, the super-patriot, who is egged on by his colleagues to tell jokes, while they know that his son has been killed. There is the magnificent scene of the soldiers' riot at the railway station, when Cripure slaps Nabucet, and is provoked to a duel by the latter. Little by little, the whole town unfolds before our eyes; and as each character passes by, with his particular grimace of self-rationalization or hardened anguish, we gradually realize that this part of France is not essentially different from a little town in imperial Russia or Germany, or in America —that it is the city of dead souls who "are more afraid of truth than of death itself."

Guilloux's triumph is to have shown the intimate resemblance of this milieu and of his chief character, who in appearance is opposed to it. Cripure is not merely a romantic failure; his presence in the city of the dead souls is not accidental. He is the subjective counterpart of this city; he is this city inside out. "They," as he scornfully refers to the professors, the cynics, the bourgeoisie, represent brutal pragmatic action; for "them," values, faith, consciousness are but a convenient façade. In Cripure we see, on the contrary, lucidity detached from life. What he really suffers from, what finally causes his undoing, is the anguish of useless clarity. He is the symbol of the sterile understanding that changes nothing, that is not even able to keep him from sinking to lower and lower moral levels, that transforms the most tragic realities into farce.

Parallel to the unfolding of the external events that end with Cripure's death, there is the progressive crumbling of his reasons for existence. At a time when "the human undertaking is foundering in blood and woe," the sneering attitude is of no avail; the despised world gets in its revenge; despite himself Cripure's contempt for mankind is augmented by self-contempt; he is forced to realize his impotence, his futility, and must admit that his hatred for the bourgeoisie is but an easy way out, a superior kind of self-delusion. He, whose great pride is never to let himself be duped, is both duper, accomplice and more duped than anyone. "I am just one of them." When his last rationalization is destroyed, his suicide follows as a logical necessity.

NORBERT GUTERMAN.

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One Hundred Notable Books: 1936

Biography and Memoirs

St. Helena, by Octave Aubry. Lippincott. $5.
Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, by James Boswell, edited by Frederick A. Pottle and Charles H. Bennett. Viking. $5.
Jefferson in Power, by Claude G. Bowers. Houghton Mifflin. $3.75.
Fighting Angel, by Pearl Buck. John Day-Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.
The Autobiography of G. K. Chesterton. Sheed and Ward. $3.
Theodore Parker: Yankee Crusader, by Henry Steele Commager. Little, Brown. $3.
From a Surgeon's Journal, by Harvey Cushing. Little, Brown. $5.
An American Testament, by Joseph Freeman. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.
Arctic Adventure: My Life in the Frozen North, by Peter Freuchen. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.50.
An American Doctor's Odyssey, by Victor Heiser. Norton. $3.50.
John Reed: The Making of a Revolutionary, by Granville Hicks. Macmillan. $3.
The Life of George Moore, by Joseph Hone. Macmillan. $5.
Brandeis: The Personal History of an American Ideal, by Alfred Lief. Stackpole. $3.
Movers and Shakers, by Mabel Dodge Luhan. Harcourt, Brace. $5.
Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography, by Ferdinand Lundberg. Equinox Coöperative Press. $2.75.
The Road to Exile, by Emilio Lussu. Covici, Friede. $2.
Sam Adams: Pioneer of Propaganda, by John C. Miller. Little, Brown. $4.
Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration, by Allan Nevins. Dodd, Mead. $5.
Green Laurels, by Donald Culross Peattie. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.
Audubon, by Constance Rourke. Harcourt, Brace. $3.
Dramatis Personae, by W. B. Yeats. Macmillan. $2.50.

Fiction

The Bells of Basel, by Louis Aragon. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
Courthouse Square, by Hamilton Basso. Scribner's. $2.50.
The Olive Field, by Ralph Bates. Dutton. $2.50.
All Brides are Beautiful, by Thomas Bell. Little, Brown. $2.50.
The Big Money, by John Dos Passos. Harcourt, Brace. $2.75.
Drums Along the Mohawk, by Walter D. Edmonds. Little, Brown. $2.50.
A World I Never Made, by James T. Farrell. Vanguard. $2.50.
Absalom, Absalom! by William Faulkner. Random House. $2.50.
Bitter Victory, by Louis Guilloux. McBride. $2.50.
The Secret Journey, by James Hanley. Macmillan. $2.50.
South Riding, by Winifred Holtby. Macmillan. $2.50.
Eyeless in Gaza, by Aldous Huxley. Harpers. $2.50.
Days of Wrath, by André Malraux. Random House. $1.50.
Stories of Three Decades, by Thomas Mann. Knopf. $3.
Gone with the Wind, by Margaret Mitchell. Macmillan. $3.
Flowering Judas, by Katherine Anne Porter. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
The Earth Trembles, by Jules Romains. Knopf. $2.50.
A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks, by Aksel Sandemose. Knopf. $2.50.
The Last Puritan, by George Santayana. Scribner's. $2.75.
Seven Red Sundays, by Ramon Sender. Liveright. $2.50.
The Brothers Ashkenazi, by I. J. Singer. Knopf. $3.
Head O' W-Hollow, by Jesse Stuart. Dutton. $2.50.
In Dubious Battle, by John Steinbeck. Covici, Friede. $2.50.
Salar the Salmon, by Henry Williamson. Little, Brown. $2.50.
A Time to Remember, by Leane Zugsmith. Random House. $2.
Education Before Verdun, by Arnold Zweig. Viking. $2.50.

Poetry, Drama, Art and Criticism

Time in the Rock, by Conrad Aiken. Scribner's. $2.50.
The Flowering of New England: 1815-1865, by Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. $4.
Collected Poems of T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
Abinger Harvest, by E. M. Forster. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.
More Poems, by A. E. Housman. Knopf. $2.
The New Caravan, edited by Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford and Paul Rosenfeld. Norton. $3.95.
A Time to Dance, by C. Day Lewis. Random House. $1.75.
Public Speech, by Archibald MacLeish. Farrar and Rinehart. $1.
Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, edited by Edward D. McDonald. Viking. $3.75.
The American Language, by H. L. Mencken. Knopf. $5.
Flowers of Evil, by Charles Baudelaire, translated by Edna St. Vincent Millay and George Dillon. Harpers. $2.75.
Hot Jazz, by Hugues Panassié. Witmark. $5.
The Assassins, by Frederic Prokosch. Harpers. $2.
The People, Yes, by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
Bury the Dead, by Irwin Shaw. Random House. $1.
The Destructive Element, by Stephen Spender. Houghton Mifflin. $2.
An Actor Prepares, by Constantin Stanislavsky. Theatre Arts. $2.50.
The Oxford Book of Modern English Verse, edited by W. B. Yeats. Oxford. $3.
The Works of Alexander Pushkin, translated by Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Babette Deutsch. Random House. $3.50.
The Best of Art Young. Vanguard. $3.

Science and Philosophy

Men of Science, by J. G. Crowther. Norton. $3.50.
Year Book of Agriculture: 1936, prepared by the Department of Agriculture. Government Printing Office. $1.25.
Studies in the Psychology of Sex, by Havelock Ellis. Random House. 4 vols. $15.

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Biology and Human Behavior, by Mark Graubard. Tomorrow Publishers. $2.50.
Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss. Harvard. 6 vols., $5 each.
From Hegel to Marx, by Sidney Hook. John Day-Reynal and Hitchcock. $4.
George Berkeley: His Life and Philosophy, by John D. Wild. Harvard. $6.

General

The Discussion of Human Affairs, by Charles A. Beard. Macmillan. $1.75.
A Diplomatic History of the United States, by Samuel Flagg Bemis. Holt. $5.
Rich Land, Poor Land, by Stuart Chase. Whittlesey House. $2.50.
The Great Russian Revolution, by Victor Chernov. Yale. $5.
The Commerce Power versus States' Rights, by Edward S. Corwin. Princeton. $2.50.
The History of the Haymarket Affair, by Henry David. Farrar and Rinehart. $4.
Why Keep Them Alive? by Paul de Kruif. Harcourt, Brace. $3.
World Politics: 1918-1936, by R. Palme Dutt. Random House. $2.50.
Migration and Economic Opportunity, by Carter Goodrich and Others. Pennsylvania. $5.
The Jews of Germany, by Marvin Lowenthal. Longmans, Green. $3.
Soil: Our National Heritage. Government Printing Office. Free on application.
Inside Europe, by John Gunther. Harpers. $3.50.
The War in Outline, by Liddell Hart. Random House. $2.
Man's Worldly Goods, by Leo Huberman. Harpers. $2.50.
We Europeans, by Julian Huxley and A. C. Haddon. Harpers. $2.50.
The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy, by C. S. Johnson, E. R. Embree and W. W. Alexander. North Carolina. $1.
The Rise of Liberalism: The Philosophy of a Business Civilization, by Harold J. Laski. Harpers. $3.
A Preface to Peasantry, by Arthur Raper. North Carolina. $3.50.
Rulers of America, by Anna Rochester. International. $2.50.
The History of Florence from the Founding of the City Through the Renaissance, by Ferdinand Schevill. Harcourt, Brace. $5.
The Far Eastern Crisis, by Henry L. Stimson. Harpers. $3.75.
The Theory and Practice of Socialism, by John Strachey. Random House. $3.
Soviet Communism: A New Civilization? by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Scribner's. 2 vols., $7.50.
Travels in Two Democracies, by Edmund Wilson. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
A New American History, by W. E. Woodward. Farrar and Rinehart. $4.
American Labor Struggles, by Samuel Yellen. Harcourt, Brace. $3.75.

This list, compiled by the New Republic staff with the help of our reviewers, is intended to cover the hundred books of 1936 that have the most interest for our own times. The "best" books, the "eternal" books, will have to be chosen by posterity.—THE EDITORS.

Pushkin and His English Translators

TO ME the publication of Yarmolinsky's introduction and Babette Deutsch's translations of Pushkin, on the occasion of his centenary, is a calamity both in literature and in our cultural relations with Russia. The book[1] is not a labor of love. Neither Yarmolinsky nor Babette Deutsch regards Pushkin as a great poet, nor regards him with personal affection, nor even—to judge by the introduction—with esteem. I never read a more priggishly contemptuous essay than the one with which Yarmolinsky introduces this great poet and great man to the American public. Pushkin's poetry, he says to begin with, "is lacking in imagery and is innocent of intellection"—a statement I can only set down to differences of opinion as to the nature of imagery and intellect that practically place Mr. Yarmolinsky and Pushkin in different biological species.

"Ruslan and Ludmila," the delightful fairy tale that charmed the whole Slavic world, that gave birth to a new poetic era and lifted Pushkin into everlasting fame, Yarmolinsky tosses into the wastebasket as "a puerile performance."

Of Pushkin's heartspoken lyrics to liberty, his rebellion against autocracy, his tender-hearted hatred of serfdom, which kept him in exile or under police surveillance practically throughout his life, Yarmolinsky can make only such remarks as these: "To an extent, his puerile bravado, his impudent escapades, his sartorial extravagances, his cynicism, were now a protest against the constituted authorities, of whom he felt himself to be the victim"—"There was much in Pushkin's situation to feed a romantic malaise and a romantic revolt against the conventions of society"—"He was not a rebel by nature but by force of circumstance."

As to Pushkin's sensitivity to women and his high, gay frankness about it, Yarmolinsky talks with the self-righteous horror of a Y.M.C.A. secretary on a bender at a soda-fountain. With exciting allusions to sexual "precocity," to "early excesses," "dire consequences to his health," "the disorderly irresponsible life of a gay bachelor," "champagne dinners," "dissipated habits," etc., he conveys the impression that this superb and monumentally productive character had no self-discipline and spent his life as a wastrel. When you reflect that Alexander Pushkin created a literary language, established a national literature, wrote a bookshelf full of narrative poems, dramatic poems, political poems, prose tales, dramas, histories and a novel in verse, *besides* writing lyrics of such intense perfection as to place his name with those who achieved immortality by doing nothing else—when you reflect that all this was achieved in a decadent society, in the face of governmental persecution and personal misfortune, and between the ages of twenty and thirty-eight, you wonder what monumental production Avrahm Yarmolinsky has under his placid desk

[1] The Works of Alexander Pushkin: Lyrics, Narrative Poems, Folk Tales, Plays, Prose, translated by Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Babette Deutsch. New York: Random House. 902 pages. $3.50.

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down there at the Public Library to justify his sneers at Pushkin's robust taste for pleasure.

All the clichés of the sex bigot are here. "He continued to fall in love with all the pretty women in sight."—"He ran after women as before." What a measureless insult to women in that phrase! And what a measureless insult to Pushkin to use that phrase even after the poet, heart-torn and desperate, was seeking in the cheap and fatuous society surrounding him for a true life-mate!

"He ran after women as before, but now with the notion of matrimony in the back of his head. . . ."

I do not know what inward grudge Mr. Yarmolinsky bears to the poets best loved by his countrymen. He described Lermontov, in prefacing some translations of mine in the "Anthology of World Poetry," as a "brilliant rake and egotistical bully"—a perfectly wanton insult that I went down and begged the publisher to remove in future editions of the book. Mr. Yarmolinsky seems to have constantly in mind some superior person who has attained such heights of saintliness and self-command that, by comparison with him, almost all fallible and wayward mortals, especially if they happen to enjoy a little pleasure, seem substantially sunk into the gutter.

If this sneering attack on Pushkin's character were followed by Pushkin's poetry, it would matter little. For Pushkin's humor and friendliness, his exquisite self-poise, his abounding tenderness toward his characters and toward his readers, his daring and his grace, his impetuous richness and yet presiding restraint, his absolute candor and absolute mastery of the instrument of speech, would win all sensitive readers, just as he won all sensitive men and women in his lifetime, to his side. For my part, I have not a doubt that in the judgment of a posterity which reckons with Russian, Pushkin will rank with the greatest poets of the world. In his best lyrics he is not inferior to Horace, whom more than any other he resembles there; and in his tales he is not inferior to Chaucer, whom he also resembles. He is to me only a little like Byron, except in the possession of irresistible humor and the bold sexual candor that goes with it. And his humor is so much more delicate than Byron's, so much more springlike and inevitable and gracefully woven in with his song, that the comparison is all to his credit. He is, in fact, supreme in what you might call lyric humor. He is supreme in an art almost peculiar to him—that of giving emotional value, and therewith a veritably classic elegance, to the phrases of ordinary, almost slangy talk. He is, in my opinion, the supreme master of rhyme. With Horace, he is supreme in conveying what I call the liquid essence of friendship. And with all this, and above it all, he has attained lyric perfection. He has conveyed in many poems that sense of the word and the feeling's being, like the wind and the force that moves it, breathlessly and inexplicably one, which places him beside Sappho and Catullus, Villon and Robert Burns.

Nothing whatever of these qualities, practically nothing distinctive of Pushkin, is to be found in the poetry in this book—either in the main body of it by Babette Deutsch, or in the additional pieces by Alfred Hayes, Oliver Elton and others. His qualities being what they are, it should be obvious at once that Babette Deutsch is the last poet in the world to translate Pushkin, even if she were at home in the Russian language. She has no humor; she has, correspondingly, no taste for the exaltation of the colloquial. She has no taste for what I mean by the liquid essence of friendship, for that is a wholly infidel and pagan substance. She has no tolerance of gay sexuality and gay candor about it, being upon this theme as self-righteously straitlaced as her husband. She shows in her own poetry not even an aspiration toward the airlike purity of Sappho and Catullus. She belongs—with all her poetic merits, which I hereby recognize—to a different breed. And as for rhyme—if she were herself the world's mistress of it, she could make nothing but a botch of her chief effort, "Evgeni Onegin." For Pushkin's rhyme-scheme in this poem is complex, and to translate a complex rhyme-scheme so that it will have grace and naturalness in another tongue, is impossible. The world is simply not so full of lucky coincidences that such an art can exist.

The result is that instead of hearing Pushkin speak for himself in his masterpiece after Yarmolinsky gets through sneering at him, we hear the laborious and painfully poetical attempt to find enough English rhymes having vaguely to do with the subject Pushkin is talking about in each stanza, so that the reader may have the exalted pleasure of knowing that throughout the whole poem, although everything else is destroyed, the rhyme scheme is the same. The reader may have even the satisfaction of knowing that, at whatever cost to the English idiom, feminine endings have been found in English wherever they occur in Russian, although because of inflections and conjugations a feminine ending in Russian is as different from what it is in English as a bear is from a beauty parlor.

Pushkin says in Stanza 40, Chapter III, of "Evgeni Onegin":

> But our summer north is a caricature
> Of winter south, flashes
> And is gone: this is well known,
> Although we don't like to admit it.

Miss Deutsch translates:

> Our northern summer, swiftly flying,
> Is southern winter's travesty;
> And even as we are denying
> Its passage, it has ceased to be.

In the next stanza a wolf with a she-wolf has come out on the road in the autumn cold:

> Smelling him, the road horse snorts—
> And the prudent traveler dashes
> Full speed up the hill.

Miss Deutsch, mistaking the word *dorozhny* for *drozhaschy,* has the horse "quiver" instead of merely belonging to the road:

> The horse who scents him snorts and quivers,
> The traveler observes and shivers
> And dashes uphill and is gone.

It doesn't matter so much about the mistake. It is Miss Deutsch's wish for all this quivering and shivering which disqualifies her as a translator of Pushkin. I do not know how much she shares of her husband's introductory opinions, but the statement that Pushkin's poetry lacks imagery could be made only by a person of crudely immature taste.

Pushkin, after Tatiana has confessed her love for Onegin and been advised by him to forget it, says:

> What were the consequences of the interview?
> Alas, it is not hard to guess!
> The mad sufferings of love did not cease to
> Agitate her young soul, thirsty of grief.
> No—poor Tatiana burns still more with
> Uncontrollable passion; sleep flies her bed;
> Health, the bloom and sweetness of life,
> The smile, the maiden restfulness,
> All are vanished like an empty sound.
> And darling Tanya's youth is going out,
> Just as the day, when hardly born,
> Puts on the shadow of a storm. . . .

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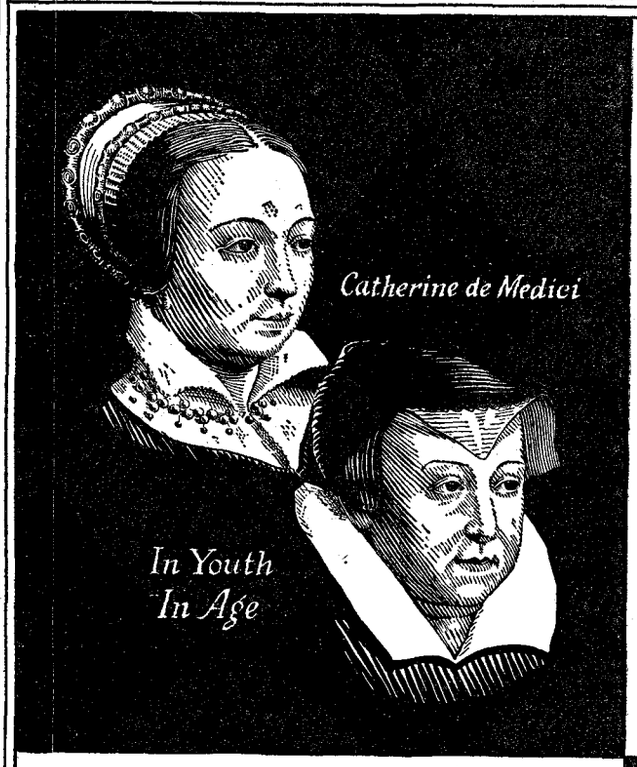

Biography of a Family

MILTON WALDMAN

Here is the dramatic story of Catherine de Medici; her marriage, her royal children, and of the decay and downfall of a once splendid family. "A magnificently dramatic book that catches the attention like a novel and will not let it go . . . Catherine, her children, her era are irresistibly alive."—*New York Herald Tribune* Illustrated. $3.00

Their Weight in Wildcats

JAMES DAUGHERTY

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Miss Deutsch translates:

> What of the tryst, then, so ill fated?
> Alas, it is not hard to guess!
> The pains of love still agitated
> The soul so shy of happiness;
> The promise of her spring was blighted,
> But love grew greater unrequited;
> She could but peak and pine and weep,
> And night would find her far from sleep.
> Lost like a muted sound and vanished,
> Her virgin calm is of the past;
> Poor Tanya's youth is fading fast,
> And health and hope and joy are banished:
> Thus darkly drives the storm that shrouds
> The brightest dawn in sullen clouds.

In some of the lyrics, where she has not concentrated on the Chinese puzzle of translating rhyme-schemes, the calamity is less awful than this. In certain stanzas she even creates a poetic eloquence of her own—notably in "The Prophet," where Pushkin, basing himself on Isaiah, draws a little close to Babette Deutsch's natural orbit. Even here, however, the eloquence is alien. And in most of the lyrics Miss Deutsch seems actually to be trying to improve Pushkin along lines of her own. The famous poem, "Winter Evening," for instance, in which Pushkin addresses the old nurse who shares with him his lonely exile in Mikhailovskoe, begins so simply and with a construction so natural in English, that the translation, *if you care for Pushkin,* is almost inevitable:

> The storm with dark the heaven covers,
> Spinning snowy whirlwinds wild,
> Now like a beast in fury howling,
> And now crying like a child.

Only the words *wild* and *in fury* need be added to make rhyme and rhythm; otherwise the translation is literal. But Miss Deutsch abandons that trim silver-wire-like grammatical structure, which is of Pushkin's essence, and turns the verse into a small, irregular pile of things, storms, tempests, gales—three names for the subject of Pushkin's verb!—patterns, clouds, wailings, etc.:

> Storm-clouds dim the sky; the tempest
> Weaves the snow in patterns wild;
> Like a beast the gale is howling,
> And now wailing like a child.

Her translation of the lines:

> Chto zhe ti, moia starushka
> Priumolka u okna?
>
> Nanny, sitting at the window,
> Can't you give me just a word?

is to me as true to the mood of the original as though one were to translate "Ave atque vale": "Hello, baby, and goodbye!" The poem is as important, too, in a world view of literature as that of Catullus—as choking in its emotion, as elevating in its perfection and of greater social significance.

Almost all translations are bad, and for a very simple reason—namely, that they are made by ordinary people, and ordinary people are conventional. Adrift on a sea of unfamiliar impressions they grab for the usual phrase as a drowning man grabs for a well tested life-preserver properly stamped "For Adults." Thus, wherever an eminent writer has found in his own tongue an unusual expression—and he is eminent only because he finds them—the translator, confusing its *native unusualness* with its *foreignness to him,* seeks frantically through the awesome jungle of his own language for a *usual* expression with which to match it. And if he finds one absolutely commonplace, he cries *Eureka!* and sets it down upon his page in triumph. That is the simple reason why almost all translations are bad. And it can be illustrated from any and all of the translations in this book. In "Boris Godunov," for instance, Vorotynsky says: "Of course, the blood of an innocent baby will prevent his ascending the throne." Shuisky answers: "He'll stride over it; Boris is not so timid." Instead of "he'll stride over it," which he apparently takes for a customary Russian way of dealing with baby's blood, the translator says: "He'll not be balked," which is indeed customary enough, and colorless enough, in English. Such a translation should be thrown out of the window without more ado.

A still worse fault in most translations, and especially of Pushkin, arises from the desperate concern of the translator to be literary. Pushkin is characterized, not only as an individual genius, but as an event in the history of language, by his lifting into literature the simple and straight talk of a nation of untutored and "barbarous" Slavs—or better, perhaps, lifting literature up to that talk. Thus, the crime of literariousness is a double treason against Pushkin. It too can be illustrated from every translation, and practically every page, of this book.

In "Boris Godunov," Pushkin writes:

> Some time, an industrious monk
> Will find my fervent, nameless work.

His translator:

> A day will come when some laborious monk
> Will bring to light my zealous, nameless toil.

"A day will come," "bring to light" and "toil"—three expressions in two lines born of the pure desire to be literary!

Constance Garnett's translations are so afflicted with literariousness that they have falsified our whole impression of Russian fiction for three generations. She contributes only one poem to this book:

> Thou shalt not, poet, prize the people's love.
> The noise of their applause will quickly die;
> Thou shalt not hear the judgment of the fool
> And chilling laughter from the multitude. . . .
> Art thou content? Then leave the herd to howl;
> Leave them to spit upon thine altar fires
> And on the dancing incense of thy shrine.

Pushkin says:

> Poet! Don't prize the people's love.
> Their momentary noisy praise will pass.
> Listen to the fool's judgment and the laugh of
> the cold crowd.
> But you stay hard and calm and sullen . . .
> Are you satisfied? Then let the crowd scold
> And spit upon the altar where your fire burns,
> And shake your tripod in their childish zest.

The only poems in this book that can be read with any satisfaction by one who has read Pushkin, are those of A.F.B. Clark. They, too, have been considerably exalted upwards, and adorned with enough "forsooths" and "e'er since the hour's" and such like polished relics to remove us a good way from Pushkin, but they are not treasons to his style. One reason for this is that they are in blank verse, and the writer does not continually find himself doing something that *cannot* be well done. A man moved to translate rhymed poems in rhyme ought to be ready, and ought to be in a position, to throw away any poem with which he has bad luck. The possibility of a good rhymed

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translation, where it exists, is good luck, and where it does not exist, to insist on making the translation is stupid and stubborn and foolish. From this it follows that the only way to translate long poems with a fixed rhyme scheme, above all an elaborate one, is to abandon the scheme altogether, explaining what it is, and then suggesting it by rhyming a word now and then where this proves naturally possible. It seems to me these statements should be self-evident to anybody who knows the difference between a poem and a cross-word puzzle.

The prose translations in this book are—naturally—better than the poems, although those of Natalie Duddington suffer from all the same faults. Those of T. Keane are written in a swift, simple and flexible English that preserves the grace, if not the unique vigor, of Pushkin's language. So much in mitigation!

On the other hand, the book is so exquisitely designed and bound by Random House as to delude the reader into thinking it must contain good poetry, and thus increase the calamity of its publication. MAX EASTMAN.

Books for Children

From the annual harvest of children's books, Miss Jessie Stanton, director of the Harriet Johnson Nursery School in New York City, and Miss Ellen Steele, director of Rosemary Junior School, Greenwich, Connecticut, have selected the following titles as representing the best of the season.

For the young child, familiar experiences make the best story material. Therefore the books for younger children were chosen by Miss Stanton from those that deal with subjects not too remote from the child's own life. The books for older children, chosen by Miss Steele, are chiefly straight fiction, stories based on history and descriptions of life in other parts of the world—but no book is listed unless the information it contains is authentic and is worked into the story in a colorful way.—THE EDITORS.

FOR CHILDREN AGED FOUR AND FIVE

MITTENS, by Clare Turlay Newberry (31 pages; Harpers, $1.50). A beautiful book; delightful pictures and story of a kitten who got lost and then was found again. Highly recommended.

MISS CARLOTTA, by Lionel Reid (45 pages; Oxford, $1.25). Chic illustrations and a very entertaining story of a little girl who went to tea with a king. Highly recommended.

TAMMIE AND THAT PUPPY, by Dorothy and Marguerite Bryan (30 pages; Dodd, Mead, $1). A kitten finds That Puppy a great nuisance so he starts out on a search for a new home. He finds one with his friends Michael and Patsy, but there is no room for him on their cushion so he returns, to be welcomed by everybody, even That Puppy.

JEROME ANTHONY, by Eva Knox Evans (88 pages; Putnam's, $2). A sequel to "Araminta," in which a little girl learned what it's like in the country. Jerome Anthony comes to the city and makes wonderful city discoveries. More of Eric Berry's appropriate illustrations.

TRAFFIC, by Marion S. Lowndes and Frances M. Chrystie (32 pages; Doubleday, Doran, $1). Ned the garageman and his cat, Ethyl, see the world go past the garage. Many good photographs of everyday city sights.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT MOLLY, by Marjorie Flack (32 pages; Houghton Mifflin, $1). Molly is tied to a post of the wharf to do her fishing, while the boys go out in a boat, but her luck is better than theirs. Plenty of large pictures in color and black and white, full of the detail that children love.

THE DIRIGIBLE BOOK, by William Clayton Pryor and Helen Sloman Pryor (28 pages; Harcourt, Brace, $1). Story and photographs of a trip two children take in a dirigible. Authentic and interesting. (Ages five to seven.)

TUGBOAT, by Henry B. Lent (86 pages; Macmillan, $1.75). An informative story of a tugboat describing how it works. Dramatic line drawings. Good for school use. (Ages five to nine.)

SING A SONG OF SEASONS, by Flavia Gag (29 pages; Coward-McCann, $1.50). Delightful songs and attractive pictures. (Age five and older.)

PICTURE SCRIPTS, edited by a committee from the Lincoln School (Grosset and Dunlap, 15 cents in paper, 25 cents in cloth):

"The Picnic," by James S. Tippett, is a simple story of a Negro family and their experiences at a picnic.

"Matilda, the Old-Fashioned Hen," by Elizabeth Matson, is a lively, funny story in pictures and rhymes about a setting hen, a proud rooster and their family.

FOR CHILDREN AGED SIX TO EIGHT

TEENY AND THE TALL MAN, by Julian Meade (155 pages; Doubleday, Doran, $2). A jolly story of a little girl and the fun she had with the tallest man in the world. Breezy illustrations by Grace Paull.

THE HOG GOES DOWNSTREAM, by Marion Bullard (95 pages; Harcourt, Brace, $1.50). An amusing story which proves that hogs would really rather wallow than be clean.

PLOUF, by Lida, translated by G. Duplaix (38 pages; Harpers, $1). Beautiful colored lithographs accompany a story about a little wild duck and his life in a wild-duck pond. A Père Castor book.

POMPOM, by Lida, translated by G. Duplaix (a companion volume to "Plouf"; 36 pages, $1). A baby red squirrel and his life in the forest. More beautiful colored lithographs and a really interesting story.

BOUNCING BETSY, by Dorothy Lathrop (38 pages; Macmillan, $1.50). Betsy, a baby lamb, goes bouncing away from Martha, and meets strange sights and animals before bouncing back to be a pet lamb. Lively pictures in Miss Lathrop's inimitable style.

PIG O WEE, by Ellis Credle (42 pages; Rand, McNally, $1). An entertaining story about Pig O Wee and how he brought Lem and his Mammy and his Pappy a "tune box." Pictures in soft colors. (Ages seven and eight.)

LITTLE BLACK ANT, by Alice Crew Gall and Fleming H. Gall (128 pages; Oxford, $1.50). Another nature story by the authors of "Ringtail and Wagtail," that is alive and truly "ant." It tells about real black ants and how they live and work. (Age seven and older.)

THE STORY OF FERDINAND, by Munro Leaf (70 pages; Viking, $1). An uproariously funny story of Ferdinand, a gentle bull, who preferred to sit quietly under a tree; and of how he found himself possessing a reputation for fierceness, and what he did about it. Large print and easy reading. (Age seven and older.)

INDIANS TODAY, by Mario and Mabel Scacheri (182 pages; Harcourt, Brace, $2). Splendid photographs and information about the Indians now living in the Southwestern United States; of special interest for children who have been studying about the Indians of the past.

FARM ON THE HILL, by Madeline Darrough Horn (78 pages; Scribner's, $2). A simple farm story with distinguished illustrations by Grant Wood.

MITTY ON MR. SYRUP'S FARM, by Ruth and Richard Holberg (32 pages; Doubleday, Doran, $1). While on a Sunday-school picnic, Mitty falls into the brook. She has to go to Mr. Syrup's farm to get dried out, and there she has more adventures. Easy reading for beginners.

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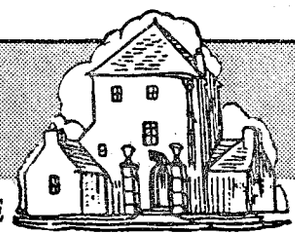

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FATHER'S BIG IMPROVEMENT, by Caroline D. Emerson (148 pages; Stokes, $1.25). A story beginning on the first day of the blizzard of '88, which tells simply and amusingly how running water, a hot-air furnace, telephone, electric light and an automobile came to the Marshall family. (Eight and nine.)

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THE HURRICANE, by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall (257 pages; Little, Brown, $2.50). A novel that may be included for older children who were interested in "Mutiny on the Bounty."

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The Missionary

Fighting Angel, by Pearl Buck. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock-The John Day Company. 302 pages. $2.50.

MRS. BUCK sets out to tell the story of her father here as she told the story of her mother in "The Exile." "I put aside relentlessly Carie's side of the story," she writes firmly, and the resolve is significant. So is Mrs. Buck's habit of alluding to herself in the third person as "Carie's daughter." Most significant of all is her statement that Carie's daughter never "knew what to do with 'Andrew.' He fitted into no niche as a father. Great missionary he was, intrepid soul, but there was no fatherhood in him. He had to be . . . considered not as a father, but as a man."

I think a child who feels this about her father faces an almost insurmountable obstacle when she attempts the biography of the man. "His children were merely accidents that had befallen him," Mrs. Buck writes with lingering resentment, and her story amply bears this out. Andrew's real life was obviously lived away from his family just as theirs was lived away from him. When he came home from his long preaching trips in the interior, "nothing seemed quite natural until he was gone again." Yet, as Mrs. Buck also records, wherever he went he was loved and welcomed by the Chinese, even the children following him in the streets with happy devotion. He loved and trusted them in return, frequently championing them against his fellow missionaries and even against his superiors. He had "infinite patience with the people to whom he felt himself sent." Once he was captured by bandits, but when they learned who he was they not only let him go, but returned his purse to him and allowed him to preach to them. Perhaps this account should have been rounded out by some word from these people to whom he felt himself drawn. Mrs. Buck is conscientiously determined to give credit where credit is due to her heroic, saintly and unloved parent, but her portrait of him is necessarily incomplete.

Curiously, Andrew's heroic quality does come through, in spite of the emotional conflict he sets up in his biographer. His integrity, his courage, his singleness of purpose were on a grand scale. He was, no doubt, a trying husband and father. Zealots, religious or otherwise, frequently are, and are themselves pretty severely tried in these relationships especially when, like Andrew, they have blundered into them from a sense of duty with no very clear idea of what they entailed. Mrs. Buck, despite her resolve to put aside Carie's side of the story and do full justice to Andrew's, is still preoccupied with the frustrations of her mother's life. Her identification with Carie is passionate and profound. Carie's life was bitter and Andrew, according to Carie's daughter, "never touched the fringe of human life, never knew its stuff, never felt its doubt or shared its pain. And so he lived, a happy soul, and never knew he died." The springs of this happiness Carie's daughter did not share or communicate.

There is another story hinted at in these pages: it is the story of the women missionaries—not merely the missionary wives and exiles, but the strong-willed women who themselves felt and answered a call. The women who worked and sacrificed and obeyed as heroically as Andrew did, without the rewards of prestige and authority that came to their masculine associates. The women who couldn't even speak in missionary meetings because of Saint Paul, or read aloud their own reports of the work they had done. Their story is an extension of Carie's story and it is one to which Mrs. Buck could do full justice. The few pages she devotes to it in this book are superb.

MARTHA GRUENING.

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Thoreau's Townspeople

Men of Concord, by Henry David Thoreau. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 267 pages, illustrated. $4.50.

FRANCIS H. ALLEN, associate editor of Thoreau's complete works, has selected these 250-odd pages from the Journal. They emphasize Thoreau the lover of humanity, who saw his fellow townsmen as figures out of Homer, and valued them for their simplicity. The men dealt with are mostly workers and hunters and farmers, although Emerson, Alcott and the younger Channing appear now and then to complete the picture, so Concord stands up living. And besides these expected types, there are occasional exotics—the Indians were already exotics by that time, and Thoreau tells of seeing one "looking as wild as ever among the pines" but "stepping into a railroad car with his gun"; there is the fugitive slave whom Thoreau of course helped, and there is the drunken Irish neighbor who had fought at Waterloo. The natural descriptions are kept in the background here; the foreground is peopled with warm and living men. With the material arranged in this way, many of Thoreau's observations are given new force: "The laborers whom I know, the loafers, fishers and hunters, I can spin yarns with profitably, for it is hands off; they are they and I am I still." Or, "It is a pleasant fact that you will know no man long, however low in the social scale, however poor, miserable, intemperate and worthless he may appear to be, a mere burden to society, but you will find at last that there is something which he understands and can do better than any other." In every way, "Men of Concord" is a beautiful book: N. C. Wyeth's water-colors of strong-faced men in tranquil New England settings are in keeping with the strong and quiet prose.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

East of Bagdad

Half the World Is Isfahan, by Caroline Singer and Cyrus LeRoy Baldridge. New York: Oxford University Press. 153 pages. $5.

TO MOST American readers, Persia, now Iran, spells Omar and Cyrus and Alexander—a dash of ancient history rejuvenated by the Persepolis diggings and flavored with bulbul-inspired quatrains and Sohrab and Rustum miniatures. It is the Persia that is now Iran which is brought to us in this lovely book, lavishly illustrated with color plates and marginal drawings by Mr. Baldridge and written by his wife, Caroline Singer.

The title, derived from an old proverb, is slightly misleading. Isfahan may still be half the world to its inhabitants, as it was in the time of Shah Abbas, but the Baldridges did not limit their year's stay in Iran to Isfahan. Entering by way of the Persian Gulf and Bagdad, they traveled by car the length and breadth of Iran, pausing for leisurely visits to such cities as Tehran, Tabriz, Meshed, Shiraz. Their interest is not in the Persia of antiquity, but in the living people of Iran. Here are the "new" Iranian women, concerned with the problem of veils and the meeting of men in mixed gatherings, the "new" theater, still creaking with crude plot, the "new" doctor who cannot get a foothold, and scarcely audible hints of dissatisfaction with the Shah. To Caroline Singer the bazaars, where apprentices from seven to twelve years of age hammer brass or crouch over their rug weaving for a starvation wage, are not picturesque. But she does not travel as a tourist.

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The Baldridges are seasoned travelers who have known the Far East and Africa. They take advantage of gilt-edge letters of introduction, but they mingle with the people as well. The result in this book is a vivid cross-section of modern Iranian society in pictures and text. The enjoyment is twofold: an esthetic pleasure in the illustrations and a sense of not being cheated, as one so often is in a "gift book," by supplementary descriptions that are gushing and meaningless. ELSIE WEIL.

The Vital Florence

History of Florence from the Founding of the City through the Renaissance, by Ferdinand Schevill. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 570 pages, illustrated. $5.

AS INTRODUCTION to his own work, Professor Schevill sketches Florentine historiography from graphic but credulous Villani to profound and meticulous Davidsohn, "greatest master of them all." In every issue where Davidsohn has already spoken Schevill defers to him. Davidsohn's history, however, has not advanced beyond the early fourteenth century. Its completion is unlikely. Moreover, it is too detailed for the general reader. Professor Schevill is providing for this reader. He brings down the story of the significant Florence—that is, the independent self-governing city-state—to its demise in 1530. To proceed farther would be to dissect "the remains after life has fled."

The story of this vital Florence is essentially that of a business center indomitably striving to extend the range of its operations. This is the thread of consistency running through all tortuous changes in policy, domestic and foreign. The name "commune" has been misleading. Except for a few short revolutionary intervals, the city government was never democratic. True, the formally lasting constitution established by the Ordinances of Justice (1293) was designed to disfranchise the remaining feudal nobility, and was therefore democratic in seeming, but in fact an oligarchy of the greater guilds, of "big business," always controlled. Concentration of power was more efficient for business than it was for war. And to crush or absorb their Tuscan rivals the Florentines used armed force as well as peaceful competition. It was business policy again, not piety, that led to siding with pope against emperor. The temporal sovereign was too much inclined to curtail privileges and to levy tribute.

Looked at from the politico-economic angle—and the historian is bound primarily so to look—the story of medieval and Renaissance Florence is for the most part a distressingly sordid one. Florentine traders and financiers too often show a "fine Italian *under*hand" behavior—until at least understandable is Dante's portrayal of his "beloved sheepfold" as possessed by "wolves," and become the "Satan-plant" that

> Doth the accursèd flower [the florin] bring forth
> and spread,
> Which having turned the shepherd to a wolf,
> Hath everywhere both sheep and lambs misled.

But it is not rapacity or chicanery that makes Florentine civilization a precious memory and, by virtue of its legacies in literature and the arts, in science and philosophy, more than a memory. Professor Schevill duly spreads these cultural achievements upon his record, while modestly dis-

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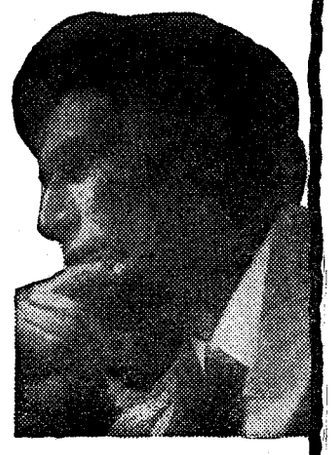

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DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM, a lecture by David Ramsey of the Communist Party on Friday, Dec. 18, 8 p. m., Webster Hall, 125 East 11th St., New York. 25c at Workers Book Shop, 50 East 13th Street, 35c at door. Auspices: Peoples Forum.

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claiming specialized proficiency in their fields. His treatment of them, however—especially of the fine arts—is so illuminating that one could wish he had given himself more leeway. He *might* indeed have recognized Michelangelo as a lyric poet—"first in some things" like Donne—as well as sculptor, painter, architect, engineer. He might not advisably have perpetuated that moral contrast between Machiavelli and More. "Sir Thomas More," he says, "projected in his 'Utopia' an ideal society patterned on Apostolic Christianity." Did More? His Utopians are altogether rationalistic and hedonistic; they keep a slave people in brutal ignorance for cannon fodder; they shorten wars by poisoning enemy wells and assassinating enemy rulers.

But one must not cavil in the face of an admirable book. Professor Schevill shows himself richly informed and singularly fair-minded. He is readable and clear, often charitably glozing over too tedious minutiae not to blur the picture as a whole. He offers the test: "If the Arno city does not emerge from between the covers of this book as a living reality, if its noble civilization does not take on a fresh meaning, the author will and should be judged to have labored in vain." It seems to the present reviewer that the author has not labored in vain.

JEFFERSON B. FLETCHER.

Contributors

REXFORD G. TUGWELL, Under-Secretary of Agriculture, resigned a few days ago to become executive vice-president of the American Molasses Company of New York.

HOWARD NUTT, by trade a draftsman, was an editor of Direction and has contributed to Poetry, The Yale Review, The New Caravan and other publications.

EDMUND WILSON is planning a new series of essays for The New Republic. His most recent book is "Travels in Two Democracies," published last summer.

M. E. RAVAGE, the author of "An American in the Making" and other books, is an international journalist who makes his home in Paris. When he last wrote us, he was leaving Barcelona for Madrid to report the military situation.

EDGAR JOHNSON lectures on satire and esthetics at the New School for Social Research. He is now completing a book on English biographical literature, entitled "A Glass of Times."

LOUIS M. HACKER has been teaching economic history at Columbia University since 1934. A new book, a study of the role of capitalism in American history, is to be published in 1937.

GEORGE MILBURN, author of "Oklahoma Town," "No More Trumpets" and "Catalogue," is an Oklahoma tall-talesman now exiled to Missouri.

CARLTON BROWN, a contributor of articles and short stories to numerous magazines, is at present employed on the Federal Writers' Project in New York City.

HERMAN SIMPSON has contributed numerous reviews to The New Republic, particularly in the fields of political theory and history.

HELEN WOODWARD has been successful in two careers, advertising and authorship. Her most recent books are "Queen's in the Parlor" and "Three Flights Up."

NORBERT GUTERMAN, a resident of New York City, writes for magazines here and in Paris.

MAX EASTMAN, poet, editor and critic, has made a number of translations from the Russian, notably Trotsky's "History of the Russian Revolution."

MARTHA GRUENING writes extensively for the serious magazines, especially in the field of race relations.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE lives in Chicago, and till recently was on the staff of Ringmaster. He writes frequently for English magazines.

ELSIE WEIL is associate editor of Asia magazine.

JEFFERSON B. FLETCHER is professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University, author of a number of books, and a translator of Dante and Italian Renaissance literature.

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